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*To*

*From S. Haldar, Samlong Farm, NAMKUM P. O.,  
(Ranchi), India.*













# THE BIBLE EXAMINED

BY  
A HINDU.

Reason is the only faculty we have wherewith to  
judge concerning everything— even revelation itself.

*BISHOP BUTLER.*

CALCUTTA.  
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*Eight Annas.*

It must be remembered that there is no such thing as finality in philosophical thinking.....Our duty is carefully to watch the progress of human thought, and to maintain an independent, critical attitude towards it.

SIR MAHAMMAD IQBAL.

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the most striking characteristics of the "mild Hindu" is his intense spirituality. It did not escape the observation of the great English writer, Mr. Aldous Huxley, during his visit to India. He said : "A little less spirituality, and the Indians would now be free—free from foreign domination and from the tyranny of their own prejudices and traditions." \* The same view has been expressed by an eminent Indian educationist, Dr. R. P. Paranjpye, in "The Crux of the Indian Problem," wherein he states that excessive devotion to authority in religion and in other spheres of life and the slight regard paid to the reasoning faculty are the main characteristics of the Indian people and the cause of most of the troubles from which their country is suffering. The Hindu dislikes and denounces any disparagement of other religions and his natural disposition is to treat all religions with reverence.

There are some features of Christianity, such as authoritarianism and other-worldliness which make a strong appeal to him. Thus the statement of the great Catholic writer, Mr. Hilaire Belloc, that he accepts what his Church teaches and trusts her more than his own reason is regarded by him as worthy of the highest admiration. The Hindu is aware of the opinion entertained by the most eminent Christians about his own religion. For instance, he knows that the eminent Bishop Heber had

\* "The Jestings Pilate : the Diary of a Journey."

described the heathen of Ceylon as vile and that the Bishop had expressed wonder how God had vainly strewn his gifts with lavish kindness on such vile people. He knows how the great Scotch Missionary, the Rev. Dr. Alexander Duff in his famous Exeter Hall speech had condemned those who wrote sentimentally of India and its

Fields of paradise and bowers  
Entwining amaranthine flowers

and how he had gone on to draw his own picture of heathen India in the following delectable terms :

Above, the spiritual gloom of a gathering tempest, relieved only by the lightning glance of the Almighty's indignation—around, a moral wilderness where all light dies and only death lives—and underneath, one vast catacomb of immortal souls perishing for lack of knowledge. \*

With the growth of self-consciousness amongst the Hindus, Missionaries have found it prudent, for the purpose of their propaganda, to avoid expressing their real views with such brutal frankness. This change of tactics enables many educated Hindus to say "Well, the Missionaries of the present day do not abuse Hinduism in the way their predecessors did. We should therefore reciprocate by avoiding all criticism of Christianity." These Hindus are oblivious of the plain fact that there can be no real change in the feelings of men who are convinced that there is no salvation outside their own faith and who are here to save heathen souls from eternal damnation. Mr. Harold Begbie (son of a clergyman and a well-known author) has only recently

\* "Christianity and the Government of India" by Arthur Mayhew, C. I. E., p. 178

described Hinduism as a "weltering chaos of terror, darkness and uncertainty" and as "a religion without the apprehension of a moral evolution, without definite commandments, without a religious sanction in the sphere of morals, without a moral code, without a God, except a Being who is a mixture of Bacchus, Don Juan and Dick Turpin." \* The Rev. W. A. Hobson stated with commendable frankness in the *Statesman* (March 1, 1927): "The popular view is and always has been that Christianity is the only true religion and that all other religions are utterly false and even of diabolical origin. This has been the belief not only of the rank and file in the Church but also of many Christian men and women of high intellectual standing." In the face of all this such men will shout "hands off" to a fellow who may venture to examine Christianity in a critical spirit. Many Hindus, some of them titular Rajas and Maharajas, have made liberal contributions towards the construction of churches, chapels and Missionary schools and philanthropic institutions and many of them do not hesitate to speak and write applauding the excellent work of Christian Missionaries who are working here for the avowed purpose of evangelization. Missionaries and other Christian writers give out, without meeting with contradiction, that men like Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Rabindranath Tagore have received inspiration for all the good they have accomplished from the teachings of Lord Jesus Christ.

How, then, has the present writer, a nonentity, being

\* "The Light of Asia", published by the Christian Literature Society for India.

a mere Hindu, ventured to stand up to the phalanx of missionaries of various denominations who are actively engaged in propagating Christianity in India? It may be stated, by way of explanation, that he was brought up as a boy in a Christian boarding school where he was the sole non-Christian, barring one or two Burmese and three Siamese students, and he came to imbibe a militant spirit while he became a believer in Christianity, which he discarded in later life, in favour of Vedantism. But the immediate cause is that he has received direct inspiration from a gentleman who was a Hindu, who had been educated in a Missionary college, and who became a convert to Anglicanism and finally transferred his allegiance to the Church of Rome. As a zealous convert he now fully believes that his Church is the only depository of truth and that it is the only one through which salvation can be procured; and he denies that there is any true religion outside that Church. He has fully accepted the teaching of that Church that it is a duty to believe and a sin to doubt what is tendered for belief in the name of the true religion. The writer has accepted this gentlemen's suggestion and undertaken a short review of the seamy side of Christianity not with the object of shaking his faith in his Church but in the hope of showing others, who possess an open mind, that the dogmas of Christianity are such as cannot be accepted merely on the authority of Christian teachers, without careful examination. In accepting what was a broad hint from his Christian friend to enter the lists the writer will endeavour to examine some of the main topics of Christianity fairly and with the best of intentions.

The text—barring the last two Chapters, which are new—is based upon a lecture delivered by the writer on February 19, 1938, at the Staff Club, Indian Lac Cess Committee Rooms at Namkum, Ranchi, with Dr. H. K. Sen, D. Sc. (London), in the chair. The subject of the lecture was: “How I became, and why I ceased to remain, a believer in Christianity.” The lecture, which had to be prepared at rather short notice, having regard to the seriousness of the subject, at the instance of the writer’s Catholic friend, has been enlarged and re-written for the purpose of this booklet. The writer is a believer in the true method of self-education which, according to J. S. Mill, “is to question all things, never to turn away from a difficulty, and to accept no doctrine without a rigid scrutiny by negative criticism.” This is a view, which is wide asunder as the poles from that of the Catholic gentleman in regard to the authority of his Church and the duty of obedience to it.

The average Catholic submissively bows his neck to the authority of his Church ; and it is only rarely that a subtle Catholic like the late Cardinal Newman acknowledges his inability to solve the intellectual difficulties which infest all Christian dogmas.

Samlong Farm.

**Ranchi (India)**

March 21, 1938.





# THE BIBLE EXAMINED.

## I. THE BIBLE AS REVELATION.

The Christian view is that the element in Christianity which gives it a special character and constitutes its distinctive feature amongst the religions of the world is that it is a revelation. There are other religions which claim to be based on a divinely revealed book ; but Christians dismiss them as false religions of diabolical origin. The weekly contributor on Christianity in the *Times* stated in September 1923 that "in Christianity the religion and the revelation must go together." The Bible itself says : "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit—and their words were written down and preserved." The Christian idea is that man is provided with a guide to the truth about God and about mankind in the Bible as the Word of God. The same *Times* contributor wrote on September 11, 1930 : "All Christians hold that in the Bible we have the record of God's revelation of Himself to mankind." Christianity is nothing, says Mr. E. S. Bennett, if not a revelation. Now revelation can only be made by a miracle. The authority of Christianity, therefore, can be decided only by miracles ; and the religion must either be recognised to be a Divine Revelation beyond man's criticism, and, in that case, its doctrines must be received even though Reason cannot be satisfied, or the claims of Christianity to be

such a Divine Revelation must be disallowed. The alternative is quite clear. If miracle be held to be incredible, supernatural religion (such as Christianity claims to be) and its miraculous evidence must together be rejected.

The generality of Christians stand by the verbal inspiration of the Bible as the Word of God. The Bible is, in the words of the English Coronation Service, "the most precious thing that the world affords: this is the Royal Law, these are the lively oracles of God." Dean Burgon expressed the general view of Christians in the following words: "Every word of the Bible, every chapter of it, every verse of it, every syllable of it, is the direct utterance of the Most High." Similarly Spurgeon, the famous Baptist preacher, held that the Bible was inspired in every word, and even in every syllable. Cardinal Newman, as a Catholic, has declared that "the Bible is the record of the whole revealed faith."

The earliest Christians, who knew about the manner in which the books of the New Testament were compiled, regarded only the Old Testament as the Word of God, and the Apostolic Fathers apparently did not look upon the New Testament as of equal authority with the Old. There are versions of the Old Testament which are accepted as sacred by the Jews and also by Mahomedans.

But the imperfections and shortcomings of the Bible were noticed by the Church of Rome long ago. It is stated in the Preface to the Catholic Bible: "To guard against error it was judged necessary to forbid the reading of Scriptures in the vulgar languages without

the permission of spiritual guides." In 1713 Pope Clement XI had condemned the use of the Bible by the laity ; but in 1757 the Holy See authorised vernacular versions, accompanied with orthodox comments." Catholics hold that it is the Church that gives to the "Word of God" its authority. This is a wise provision ; but it lays the axe at the root of Divine Revelation which cannot but be presumed to be perfect in itself. Cardinal Newman has frankly stated in his *Apologia* that there was not a Christian dogma which was not infested with intellectual difficulties, and that speaking for himself, he could not solve any of them.

In the higher intellectual circles in Christendom the old ideas concerning a Divine Revelation have been thrown overboard. The Rev. T. F. Royds, Chaplain to the Conference of Modern Churchmen, wrote in the *Morning Post* of September 22, 1934 : "Apparently there are still so-called educated people who believe that the Bible is verbally inspired and entirely free from error and imperfection. A hundred years ago it was easy, but now it takes a very ignorant man to believe such nonsense. No Bishop on the bench believes it now ! If some of your correspondents would only read the Old Testament for themselves, they would feel less confident."

The belief in verbal inspiration and in the utter inerrability of the Bible is still adhered to by many educated Christians. They still manage to believe that every word of the Bible is the Word of God Himself, and is therefore absolutely true and free from the possibility of error. But let us refer to Chapter iii, 18-22,

of Ecclesiastes which plainly and explicitly denies immortality, one of the cardinal dogmas of Christianity, and declares that man has no more hope of a future life than the beasts. "For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth them ; as the one dieth, so dieth the other ; yea, they all have one breath ; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast ; for all is vanity." The belief in the Book of Ecclesiastes as the Word of God must be surrendered if the belief in man's immortality is to be retained. You cannot have it both ways. Again, take the Book of Job. As an answer to the problem of evil it is regarded even by a staunch Christian as worthless. \* The Almighty is represented as meeting Job's plea that he has been cruelly and wrongly punished with the question "Hast thou an arm like God, or canst thou thunder with a voice like His ?" That is to say, the Almighty is represented as arguing that because he is wiser and more powerful than Job there is no obligation on him to show Job any mercy or even justice. Could the inerrability of such a record be reasonably insisted upon ?

The dogma of a final and complete Divine Revelation miraculously obtained by Christians has been replaced in the Reformed Churches by what is called Progressive Revelation, so far at any rate as the Old Testament is concerned. The *Times* contributor on religion wrote in August 1930 : "In the Old Testament we find the record of a progressive revelation of God. There we see how He appeared to men of low spiritual capacity who expressed

\* "Artifex" in the *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, March 18, 1938.

what they discerned in terms of their own crude experience." The Bishop of London thus gave the go-by to the Word of God in a contribution which appeared in the *Sunday Statesman* of September, 1935 : "Remember, the men who wrote the Bible were men of their own particular age, of their own learning, of their own experience, of their own experience of geography and science—exactly the same as the other people who lived in their day.....The Bible is a history of progressive revelation." Canon Henson (now Bishop of Durham) preaching in Westminster Abbey on March 4, 1904, said of the Bible : "Intelligent Christians no longer listened as their fathers had to the Old Testament stories which seemed to them incredible and even demoralising."

It is worthy of note that the Church of Rome which has been aptly described as antiquity moving in the world of today and whose Pope, by the Syllabus of 1864, denounced all who would say that the Roman Pontiff can and ought to reconcile himself with progress and liberalism and modern civilization has adopted this new-fangled theory of progressive revelation in order to explain away the discreditable character of the so-called "Word of God."

As to the New Testament we may expect to be on firmer ground. But how do we really stand ? Jesus lived and died at a time when Palestine was part of the Roman Empire, when there was no lack of historiographers and chroniclers, yet we find no account of him in any book written by a Roman. In July 1924 the Bishop of Calcutta gave an address on the growth of the

New Testament. In the course of this address his Lordship pointed out that even after the passing of Jesus, the Jews looked upon the Old Testament as their Scriptures. He said that it was when Christianity spread to the Gentiles, who had not the same respect for the Old Testament, that the need for a New Testament was felt. Thus the New Testament is a human production and was not a miraculous revelation from God. The formation of the Canon occupied some stages between 70 to 397 After Christ when the Scriptures were finally accepted by the Church.\* Writing in the *Hilbert Journal* for April 1926, Dr. L. P. Jacks, D. D., showed the uncertainty of the authorship of the Gospels. He wrote : "How comes it to pass that the Gospels (the later witnesses) assign to Jesus an historical setting which makes him Paul's contemporary, while to Paul himself (the earlier witness) Jesus is evidently remote from the time in which the Epistles were written?" As to certain entries in the Gospels Christian apologists have to use their wits in such a manner as to unconsciously impugn the record. Thus the Rev. C. F. Andrews, formerly of the Cambridge University's Mission to India, referred to the 17th verse of Chap. xviii of Matthew where Christ expresses supreme contempt for heathen men and publicans, and observed that the teaching attributed therein to Christ is "in no sense the direct word of Christ" but only "a disciplinary record of the earliest practice of the Church which was inserted in the text." † So much, therefore, for the text of the New Testament.

\* *The Statesman*, July 12, 1924.

† *The Modern Review*, November, 1923.

The publication of the Revised Version of the English Bible in 1885 has brought to light several interpolations in the New Testament. Mark xvi, 17 and 18 have been found to be spurious. The passage, "Father forgive them, etc." in Luke xxiii; and the passage, "Bless them that curse you etc." in Matt. v, are now recognised as interpolations. There is an interpolation also in I John v. 7, which is quoted by supporters of the Trinitarian dogma.

The situation is so desperate that a devout Christian stated in an English paper that "the authority of the New Testament for us does not lie in an infallibility which has been often claimed for it and which scholarship has now disproved, but rather in the truth which it discovers to the spirit of man, which scholarship may indeed confirm but which it can never take away." \* The Rev. Dr. F. C. Burkitt, Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, has referred in 1933, to the decay of belief in the Bible. Sixty or a hundred years ago the Bible was a trusted authority, and Bible history, its ancient events and distant lands, was something that concerned every Christian. Now the infallible Book has gone. †

Disbelief in the Bible has been regarded as heresy and heresy has been made punishable with death. Even at the present day there stands in the English Statute Book 9 William III. C. 38, which penalizes denial of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament

\* *The Manchester Guardian Weekly*, Sept. 8, 1933.

† *The Literary Guide* (London) for Nov., 1933. p. 194.



to be of Divine authority. With the weakening of the Church blasphemy laws have fallen into desuetude ; so that "today one can question any single thing in the Old Testament ; one can even question parts of the New Testament without being regarded in any sense as a heretic." \*

Christians were at one time so sure of their Old Testament that Dr. Lightfoot (*circa* 1576 A. C.) calculated that the earth was created on October 23, 4004 B. C. at 9 a. m. But there has just been published the report of a Commission of Churchmen appointed in 1922 by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to determine the general opinion in the Anglican Church regarding Christian doctrines, from which it appears that educated Christians agree as to the mythological origin of the creation narratives in the Book of Genesis and that they reject the traditional belief in the infallibility of the Bible.

Christian Missionaries claim influential Hindus like Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Rabindranath Tagore as their allies. Some of them say that the Mahatma's influence and his frequent references to Christ and the Sermon on the Mount have greatly advanced the cause of Christianity in India. If so, the result must be due to the personality of this heathen politician rather than to the intrinsic worth of the Bible. The Mahatma states in "The Story of my Experiments with Truth" (Chapter xx) that at the request of a Manchester gentleman, who was a good Christian, he began to read the Bible ; and he

\* The Rev. Roger B. Lloyd in "The Religious Crisis."

goes on : "But I could not possibly read through the Old Testament. I read the book of Genesis and the chapters that followed invariably sent me to sleep. But for the sake of being able to say that I had read it, I plodded through the other books with much difficulty and without the least interest or understanding. I disliked reading the book of Numbers." For one thing the Mahatma is no admirer of the Christian moral sanction of fear of punishment and hope of reward. When Tagore was in America in 1917 good Christians in that country said that the poet must have derived his inspiration for "Gitanjali" from the Psalms of David. Where else, they thought, could he have found such noble thoughts? When he heard of this, the poet said : "The Bible I have never read. I tried to read it. The first two books I tried. They were so—so—violent, I could not. I have heard that the Psalms are beautiful. I must read them some day." At the present day attempts are being made to bowdlerize the Psalms by omitting its comminatory passages. In England children's editions of the Bible have been produced to make the book fit for juvenile perusal.

About the Bible which is the seat of Christian authority Bishop Gore has said in "Orders and Unity" : "The old Protestant orthodoxy stood by the sole and final authority of the Bible as the infallible Word of God. But it is exactly this position which modern knowledge is making more and more impossible." (p. 191). The Bishop has thus done away with the Creation dogma : "We should regard Adam and Eve not as historical individuals, but as Man and Woman—as Everyman."

The late Professor William James held that it was the "imbecility" of the Christian doctrine of creation which kept many intelligent Hindus from accepting Christianity. \* A missionary of the Society of Friends has stated with great candour : "To preach the theory of verbal inspiration and the Bible as a textbook of science is to court disaster sooner or later." † As to the authenticity of the New Testament record the views expressed by the late Professor Cheyne of Oxford must be held to carry weight. He said that "it is abundantly established by criticism that most of what is contained even in the Synoptic Gospels is liable to the utmost doubt," and that "what may reasonably be accepted is by no means capable of use as the basis of a doctrine of Incarnation." How do you account for the fact that (to use the words of Dr. Peake, Professor of Biblical Exegesis at Manchester) "passages which at one time were regarded as unquestionable portions of Scripture are now by common consent looked upon as spurious?" How is it that, to quote the same high authority, "men have often dogmatically asserted the verbal inspiration of a passage which is demonstrably corrupt?" The miraculous character of the Bible as Divine Revelation has thus vanished into thin air. To all but ardent believers the book is a human document, and a very defective one at that.

\* *The Manchester Guardian Weekly*, January 21, 1938, p. 55.

† Quoted by Mr. R. F. Johnston, F. R. G. S. in "Letters to a Missionary." (London : Watts, 1918).

## II. GOD IN THE BIBLE.

The Old Testament deals throughout with the acts and utterances of Jehovah, the Lord God of Israel. Jehovah appears as a tribal deity, protecting and guiding the Israelites and siding with them in their endless wars with other tribes. The Jewish King David (a man after God's own heart and the ancestor of Jesus on his father's side) believed with other men of his day that there were many tribal gods and that each god's power was confined to his own allotted territory. Thus the exile among the Philistines worshipped Dagon, while the resident in Moab was under the divine rule of Chemosh. David held, as we find from his Psalms, that the gods had their frontiers and that Jehovah's rule was restricted to the land between Chemosh and Dagon. Long after David the Israelites believed that the God of Israel was God of the hills and not of the plains. On a particular occasion Jehovah was unable to drive out the enemies of the Israelites who lived in a valley because they had chariots of iron, some primitive kind of armoured cars or tanks. (Judges i. 19).

The Bible presents to us at the outset a God who especially creates, for his own pleasure, this earth with all that it contains, including man, his greatest work. It says that the sight of his own creation afforded him delight. Strangely as it appears, he suffered a hostile power, Satan, not only to corrupt his magnificent work but to take wrongful possession of the Earth itself for an indefinite period. It is still more strange that he should have allowed this, knowing as the Omniscient

God, the evil design of Satan. This is not a pleasant aspect of the Deity. But somehow it does not strike Christians. An Englishman, Mr. William Archer, has commented on it in forceful language :

My fundamental objection to that Church (the Church of Rome) and indeed to Christianity as a whole, is that it is so irreligious. It presents to us such a childishly inadequate conception of the Almighty, and diverts our attention from the real majesty and marvel of the universe to a fairy-tale cosmogony, the highly unedifying history of a Semitic tribe, and a most immoral fragment of folklore about an irascible Creator, childishly irritated with creatures he had thrust into being, and then no less capriciously reconciled to a favoured few among them by the vicarious torture of an innocent person—whether man or God does not greatly matter. Sentimental associations dating from early childhood make it hard for many people to realise the absurdity of this piece of primitive folklore.

Another popular English writer, Marie Corelli, has thus expressed herself :

God said, "I will create  
A world in the air !"  
Satan heard and answered :  
"I too will be there !"  
God said, "I will make of man  
A creature supreme !"  
Satan answered : "I will destroy  
Thy splendid dream !"  
God said, "I will ordain  
That thou shalt no longer be !"  
Satan answered : "Thou canst not, Lord,  
For I am part of Thee !"

God's relations with the Devil as depicted in the Bible are indeed quaint. The punishment awarded to the devil for having frustrated God's creation affected

him only in his shape as a serpent, although that shape was a make-up assumed by him in order to execute his stratagem. It was ordained by God that the snake should walk on its belly and eat the dust and take rank below all cattle and lower creatures. The curse (if any) fell on reptiles of the serpent class but it did not affect the Devil whose sovereignty of the Earth remains intact. God is shown as employing Satan as his agent as in Sam. xvi, where it is said that the "evil spirit from God" tormented Saul. God employed Satan against the Holy patriarch Job to test his fidelity. It is written : "And the Lord said unto Satan, 'Behold he is in thine hand ; only spare his life, ' " (Job ii). In Isaiah xlv. 7, God claims to be the creator of evil as well as good. Christ too, like his Father, was tender to Satan while he was moving about in the country of the Gadarenes. There he was met by a man who had been possessed by devils and prayed to him for relief. Christ commanded the evil spirit to leave the man. The evil spirit cried out : "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou son of God most high ? I beseech thee, torment me not." Jesus complied with the Devil's request by allowing the Devil to enter into a herd of swine feeding in the mountain-side, skirting a lake, with the result that the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake and the poor swine lost their lives. Thus Christ favoured the Devil at the expense of the swine and to the loss of their owner, although neither the swine nor their owner had done anything to deserve such punishment.

God told Moses, the law-giver, that he would harden Pharaoh's heart so that the Egyptian King might persist

in detaining the Israelites and expose himself to punishment (Ex. iv.). God carried out this plan which was so unworthy of Him. God approved slavery (Ex. xxi.). He prescribed the punishment of stoning to death for blasphemy (expression of impious religious opinion) (Lev. xxiv.). He killed outright 50,000 men at Bethshemesh for the offence of looking into his ark (1 Sam. vi.). It is stated in Joshua that the King of Israel made war for a long time with several neighbouring tribes and that most of the opposing kings did not submit because God had hardened their hearts "that they should come against Israel in battle that he may destroy them utterly." God claimed vengeance as his special weapon and as the Lord of Hosts he promoted war. Thomas Jefferson, the third President of the United States of America and the author of the Declaration of Independence, has said that Jehoyah, the God of the Old Testament, is "a being of terrific character, cruel, vindictive, capricious and unjust." The Bishop of Winchester stated at the Church Congress on October 15, 1903, at Bristol, that the morality of the Old Testament was now "recognised in the light of modern research as presenting no final or perfect standard." It is stated in the "Encyclopaedia Britannica": "In the earlier period the Hebrew religion was of the ordinary Semitic type. In its ancient stories were remnants of primitive religion, of tabu, of anthropomorphic gods, of native forms of worship, of magic and divination, of local and tribal cults."

It is not open to Christians to disown the Old Testament which concerns itself solely with the first God of the Christian Trinity as the entire Christian system depends on the story of the Fall of man as narrated in the book of Genesis. Christ himself held to the Old Testament and made many references to it. The angel Gabriel announced to Mary that her son "shall be great and shall be called son of the Most High ; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David ; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever." Christ has carried on the traditions of King David whose throne he inherited. He received the heathen from God as his inheritance. Commenting on Psalm ii, the Rev. Colonel Seton (late of the Royal Artillery and now Vicar of Burley, Rutland) has observed : "Surely that means the teeming millions of India, Africa and the South Sea Islands, Burma, etc., to whom we have taken good government and the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ." \*

The Old Testament has its special value as a revelation of the knowledge of God. As the well-known writer, "Artifex" has expressed it in the *Manchester Guardian* : "The Jews (and the entire Bible, with the exception of Luke and Acts, and possibly one or two of the minor Epistles, is the work of the Jews) have been as indisputably the world's teachers in the knowledge of God as the Greeks were in philosophy, the Romans

\* "British Israel, Fact or Fallacy ?" (London : The Covenant Publishing Co. Ltd., 1931.)



in law, or the English in democratic government." \* As this was intended for home consumption no attempt was made by the writer to belittle the Old Testament in comparison with the New in the manner of missionaries engaged in the evangelization of educated heathen people. But the writer has betrayed his ignorance (which he shares with Western scholars generally) about the existence of knowledge and civilization outside Palestine, Egypt, Greece and Rome in ancient times. Writing in 1925 Sir Arthur Keith observed that until then only two lands could rightly claim to represent the cradle of civilization—Egypt in the valley of the Nile, and Mesopotamia, watered by the Tigris and Euphrates; but that now India had entered as a third and serious claimant.

Christ has maintained Jehovah's policy of racial discrimination, and Jehovah's spirit of revenge. He has not rescinded the Jehovistic spirit of war, or the practices of slavery and polygamy. Professor Gilbert Murray, Regius Professor of Greek, Oxford University, wrote: "To the Jews in early times Jehovah—or, as the Greeks called him, Iao—was their God and other Gods were Gods of their enemies. He had established an elaborate system of laws and taboos which marked the Jews out as his chosen people."† He wrote in the same place: "Iao was indeed a jealous God. The Christian movement starting from Jerusalem inherited the Jewish exclusiveness."

Renan has observed that Jesus limited his action en-

\* *The Manchester Guardian Weekly*, February 4, 1938.

† *The Spectator*, March 9, 1934.

tirely to the Jews and that "his life was passed in the very restricted world in which he was born." It is always asserted by Christians that Christ came to save mankind from the sin brought on them by the Devil through Adam. But the truth of the matter has been thus disclosed by Professor F. C. Burkitt, D. D., Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, in his book entitled "Jesus Christ—an Historical Outline": "He himself is reported to have said, 'It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs' and the oldest repetition of this story tells us quite distinctly that He meant that He had not been sent to outside nations but to the Israelites." Christ, when teaching the Jews how to deal with their brethern, tells them that if a man neglects to hear the Church they should regard him as a heathen man and a publican. This clearly shows that Christ discriminated between Jew and heathen just as Jehovah did. Christ's injunction to his apostles was: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel". (Matt. x.). To his own people Christ said: "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables that seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand, lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them." (Mark iv, 11-12). The spirit of racial discrimination is displayed by Christ in Matt. xviii, 17. The spirit of vengeance is displayed by him very clearly in Matt. xxv, 41, in Matt. x. 14 and Mark xvi. 16.

At the root of the doctrine of eternal punishment is the ferocious spirit of vengeance. Said Robert Burns :

The fear o'hell's a hangman's whip  
To hand the wretch in order.

Oliver Wendell Holmes said that he found it difficult to characterize "the doctrine of endless torture as the destiny of most of those who have lived and are living on this planet." \* He also said : "When the poet Cowper said satirically of the minister he was attacking,

'He never mentioned hell to ears polite,'

he was giving unconscious evidence that the sense of the barbarism of the idea was finding its way to the pulpit." Professor F. D. Maurice, a theologian, openly called in question the doctrine of eternal punishment and was, in consequence, deprived of his professorial chair at King's College, London. On that occasion his friend Tennyson invited him to share his hospitality :

Should all our churchmen foam in spite  
At you, so careful of the right,  
Yet one lay hearth would give you welcome  
(Take it and come) to the Isle of Wight.

In "Despair" a poem of his old age, Tennyson returned again to the charge. He makes the free-thinker cry out to the priest :

What ! I should call on that Infinite love  
that has served us so well ?  
Infinite cruelty, rather, that made everlasting hell  
Made us, fore-knew us, fore-doomed us, and  
does what he will with his own ;  
Better our dead brute mother who never  
has heard us groan !

The poet's fiercest attack on this savage doctrine occurs in "Rizpah", that splendid poem throbbing with humanity.

In Rom. iii. 5 and xii. 19 Jehovah's doctrine of vengeance is re-affirmed. "Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him neither in this world nor in the world to come."

Christ made certain amendm<sup>e</sup>nts in the old law ; but he did not abolish war, slavery, the killing of witches and polygamy (except in the case of Bishops)—some of the glaring blemishes he found around him.

Christ's words, "I came not to bring peace but a sword" may be explained as metaphorical, but not so those in St. John xviii. 36 : "My kingdom is not this world ; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight." The final vision of the "Lamb" (Rev. xix. 15) is : "And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword that with it he should smite the nations, etc."

Jesus said, "Be not afraid of them that kill the body" ; but when threatened with bodily injury himself, he was afraid. "Then took they up stones to cast at him : but Jesus hid himself." (John viii. 59). "Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him. But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence." (Matt. xii. 14-15). Prudential considerations carried great weight with Jesus as will further appear from John vii and x, Matt. x, xiv and Mark iii.

Jesus sanctioned divorce for the husband (Matt. v, 31-32). But he granted no such right to the wife against her erring husband. He ignored woman just as Jehovah did in the Decalogue. •

Christ's sense of justice is to be seen in the curious story of the fig-tree. "He was hungry ; and seeing a fig-tree afar off having leaves, he came if haply he might find anything thereon ; and when he came to it he found nothing but leaves, for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus said unto it : 'No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever'...and Peter...saith unto him : 'Master, behold the fig-tree which thou cursedst is withered away.' " On this Mr. Bertrand Russell (Lord Russell) observes : "That is a very curious story, because it was not the right time of year for figs, and you really could not blame the tree." \*

While Jesus asks us to pray for those who hate us and persecute us he refuses to pray for non-believers. (John xvii. 9). While he tells us to love our neighbours, he defines the term "neighbour" so as to limit its application to our benefactors (Luke x. 29-37). He asks his disciples to love their enemies but he denounces unbelievers and non-believers as dogs, swine, vipers, Satan and children of Satan. We understand him when he asks his disciples to follow him but are surprised when he asks them to *hate* their father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters (Luke xiv. 26). While he preaches non-resistance, he arranges for buying swords and for armed resistance (Luke xxii. 36-39). The heathen inquirer is told of the character of Christ, the second God of the Trinity, as depicted in the New Testament, as being far worthier of study and assimilation than that of Jehovah, God the Father, as delineated in the Old Testament. Christ's character thus discloses itself in his own

\* "Why I am Not a Christian." (London : Watts, 1927).

speech : "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. x. 32-33). But Buddha, a heathen teacher who came many centuries before Christ, spoke in a different tone. He said : "Those persons who revile me, or do me harm, or scoff at me, may they all attain Enlightenment" (Salvation). It is difficult to give the Bible credit for a representation of God entirely worthy of Him.

Jesus exhibited bad temper at the Temple when he upset the tables of the money-changers and used whips to clear the place of intruders. He showed great contempt for the literate people of his time and expressed biting judgment of Scribes, calling them hypocrites, blind guides, fools, white sepulchres, serpents, etc. His description of all teachers and prophets who had come before him as thieves and robbers (John x. 8) was rather undignified.

We quote the following observations of Mr. Bertrand Russell as they agree with our own : "I do not myself feel that any person who is really profoundly humane can believe in everlasting punishment. Christ certainly as depicted in the Gospels did believe in everlasting punishment, and one does find repeatedly a vindictive fury against those people who would not listen to his preaching—an attitude which is not uncommon with preachers, but which does somewhat detract from superlative excellence." ("Why I am Not a Christian").

The narrowness of the Christian view of God

is derived directly from the Hebrew idea of Jehovah. It shocked a man like Gladstone. He said : "Something that may be called religionism, rather than religion, has led us for the most part not indeed to deny in terms that God has been and is the God and Father of the whole human race, as well as of Jews and Christians, yet to think and act as if His providential eye and care had been confined in ancient times to the narrow valley of Jerusalem, and since the Advent to the Christian pale." By way of illustration, one or two concrete instances may be cited. Here is one from the Church of Rome. The following is an extract from a letter of the German Catholic Bishop of Lahore published in the *Christian World* and reproduced in *India* (the official organ of the Indian National Congress published in London) of December 26, 1902 :

How marvellous are the Lord's ways ! One might almost say that the Divine intention has been to make the parents disappear in order that their children might be led to the Mission and there find the Christian salvation. The last two periods of famine have brought to the Catholic Mission thousands of orphans who are all today pious Catholics.

Here is another from the Church of England. The Rev. Dr. Inge while discussing in the columns of one of Lord Beaverbrooke's organs the question of the pressure of population on subsistence, referred to an alleged improvement which was said to have taken place in the standard of living in a certain part of India by reason of the fact that half the population of that area had been drowned by flood, and observed : "I think the rice-eating people should be treated as a group by themselves. Chronic over-population, periodically relieved by flood, famine and pestilence, is the normal condition of rice-

eaters everywhere." The white man has always regarded the Australian aborigines as sub-human. At last, wrote Sir John Harris in the *Listner* in 1935, Australian official opinion has come to the conclusion that whether the remnant of aborigines are or are not so near the level of the animal kingdom that they may be shot with impunity, they are entitled to the protection of the State.

### III. MAN IN THE BIBLE.

Man, the male of the human species, is Jehovah's *magnum opus*, indeed his greatest work. Jehovah made him in his own image, after his own likeness, out of the dust of the ground. He breathed into the man's nostrils the breath of life so that man became a living soul. By making man a living soul God conferred on him a unique privilege. Even woman was denied that privilege, not to speak of the lower animals. After making man God conferred upon him dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, and over the cattle and over all the earth.

But at the outset God restricted man's liberty of action and enjoined on him the need for obedience—implicit obedience. Man was commanded to avoid eating of the "tree of knowledge of good and evil" on pain of death. His mental equipment, which he owed to God, was defective. Adam earned the unenviable distinction of being the first henpecked husband in the world. His wife had been secretly deceived by Satan, the power of evil, and made to eat the forbidden fruit. She beguiled her husband; and, yielding to her wiles he committed the great mistake of eating the fruit and



thereby disobeying the Divine command. Adam incurred the wrath of Jehovah who cursed him and his unborn progeny. Man was condemned to labour for his livelihood and all mankind was tainted with the sin of Adam. At a later time, according to the Bible, only three men were especially exempted from this terrible stigma by their own righteousness. It is said in the 14th chapter of Ezekiel: "The word of the Lord came unto me saying, though these men, Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness." At a later date Virgin Mary obtained similar exemption from the Church as the mother of Christ. According to the "Encyclopaedia Britannica" many passages from the acknowledged fathers of the Church could be cited to show that the idea of the Immaculate Conception, or Mary's absolute sinlessness, "was originally unknown to Catholicism." According to the same authority: "Even Augustine repeatedly asserts that she was born in original sin." Mr. J. M. Robertson writes: "In the 12th century began the dispute as to the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin—the doctrine, that is, of her supernatural birth—on which in later ages the Dominicans and Franciscans fought a bitter and obstinate battle, the latter affirming and the former denying the dogma. After seven centuries of temporising, the Papacy has, in recent times, endorsed it (1854)." \* These exceptions are important

\* "A Short History of Christianity" by J. M. Robertson. (London: Watts and Co., 1913, 2nd. edition). The New Standard Encyclopaedia, under 'Immaculate Conception': "Dogma that the Virgin Mary was conceived without original sin. St. Bernard repu-

only as proving the rule. It was a fierce judgment which cursed the progeny of Adam in advance for an act of disobedience in which they had no part nor lot. After all it may be contended on behalf of Adam that God in His omniscience must have known the designs of Satan and it was open to God to provide him with sufficient mental strength to prevent his catastrophic fall. Adam himself had little responsibility. He had been provided with a weak mind which yielded to the blandishments of the woman.

Adam, the first man, was of the Hebrew race and spoke the Hebrew language. But for his bungling he would have been the father of that race for all time and Hebrew would have been the world language. His shameful fall was attended by disaster. Men (who were all born sinners) multiplied and the "sons of God" were attracted by the daughters of men (so many Eves). Giants came into being on earth and they became mighty. Observing the wickedness of man God "repented" that He had made man on the earth. He did not anticipate this calamitous result. He determined to destroy mankind by a general flood. It does not appear from the record that God adopted any punitive measures against the "sons of God," the party really at fault. But that is Jehovistic justice. Only one man was spared—

diated the sinless view in 1131, Duns Scotus and the Franciscans maintained it, 1307. Aquinas and the Dominicans took the contrary view. The Council of Trent left it unsettled, but Pope Pius IX declared it a dogma of faith in 1854." So in Routledge's *Universal Encyclopaedia*: "R. C. dogma (1854) that the B. V. M. was, by a special grace of God, born without original sin."

Noah, who had found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Noah had three sons. One day as he lay in dishabille, dead drunk, his son Ham found him in that miserable state and informed his two brothers Sham and Japhet. These two covered up their father with a cloth. When Noah came to himself he got to know of these proceedings. He was furiously angry with Ham although it does not appear that that man was to blame for what had happened. At all events, Noah gave vent to his wrath not against Ham himself but against Ham's son Canaan who had no share in the episode. Noah ordained that Canaan shall serve his two uncles who received their father's blessing. As the inhabitants of Africa are the children of Canaan, the Jews, and afterwards the Christians, found justification in employing the Negroes as their slaves. This was the seed of the colour hatred which has produced such dire consequences. Mr. Winston Churchill stated in the *News of the World* in 1933 that over 660,000 slaves were held by ministers of the Gospel of the different Protestant Churches. He did not say how many slaves were owned by Roman Catholics. The most strenuous advocates for the abolition of slavery were such well-known free-thinkers as Ralph Waldo Emerson, John Stuart Mill and Moncure Conway, while the whole of Tory England shouted its approval when General Lee drew his sword on behalf of the rights of "Old Virginia" \*

Racial divisions were promoted by the attempt on the part of mankind to build a tower to serve as an

\* "The Churches and Modern Thought" by Vivian Phelps.

easy access to heaven. As the men till then spoke one language they were able to congregate and design a tower. As they were at work they were discovered by God who found that unity of language had given men extraordinary power. Let us go down to the earth, said the Almighty. He accordingly came down and caused a confusion of language. This caused the stoppage of the work of construction and the Tower of Babel was left unfinished. The language of man was confounded and men, speaking different tongues, scattered themselves over the face of the earth. Racial unity was thus done away with, and the maxim of *divide et impera* was introduced. It was an unhappy day for mankind. It will no doubt be ascribed to Adam's shameful fall.

The Biblical teaching of exclusiveness, arising from the separation of the chosen people (the Jews) from the Gentiles, of the Christians from the heathen and the infidel, has demoralised its followers. Following the Old Testament the Synagogue benediction in the Jewish Prayer Book has been thus framed: "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who hast not made me a heathen, who hast not made me a slave, who hast not made me a woman." As Professor Gilbert Murray has observed: "Iao was indeed a jealous God. The Christian movement starting from Jerusalem, inherited the Jewish exclusiveness." An Anglican clergyman of Lamourya Nyeri drew the attention of the British Colonial Office, a few years ago, to the following injunction of St. Paul to warn that office against any recognition of the claims of Indian

settlers in Kenya to equality with the white settlers : "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness ? And what communion hath light with darkness ? And what concord hath Christ with Belial ? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel ?" Colonel Seton who has, on retirement from the Army, taken Holy Orders, has in his book on "British Israel," published in 1918 by the Covenant Publishing Co., explained the term "heathen" in the passage in Psalm ii as referring to "the teeming millions of India, Africa and the South Sea Islands, Burma, etc., to whom we have taken good government and the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ."

As a good Christian the Rev. Dr. Du Plessis, Professor in the Stellenbosch University, wrote in the *International Review of Missions* : "Ought we not to regard this racial prejudice, which is so persistent and ineradicable, as fulfilling a distinct function in the Divine Order ? Nature, we are told, while careless of the single life is infinitely careful of the type. Race prejudice is primarily the instinct of race preservation." Exactly this idea has been adopted by Herr Hitler in pursuing his relentless drive against the Jews.

The Bible affords ample justification to Christians for their unnatural and unbrotherly treatment of non-Christians. Thus, before the emancipation of slavery in America in the memorable year 1863, Christians believed that the conversion of the Negroes to Christianity made no difference in their status as slaves. Reinhold Niebuhr has, in his "Moral Man and Immoral Society," quoted

the following ruling given in 1727 by the Bishop of London to the slave-owners of the southern colonies of America :

Christianity and the embracing of the gospel does not make the least alteration in Civil property or in any of the duties which belong to civil relations ; but in all these respects it continues persons just in the same state as it found them. The freedom which Christianity gives is freedom from the bondage of sin and Satan and from the dominion of man's lusts and passions and inordinate desires ; but as to their outward condition, whatever that was before, whether bond or free, their being baptised and becoming Christians makes no manner of change in them.

Mr. Cedric Dover has, in his book entitled "Half Caste" (Martin Sumer) \* referred to the Roman Catholic view as expressed by a R. C. journalist : "The Eternal Word of God might have chosen to become incarnate in the womb of a black or yellow or red or copper-coloured mother ; but he did not so choose. The Angel of Annunciation delivered his message to a White Maid."

The Dutch in South Africa are known as an intensely religious people. The Rev. C. F. Andrews, a large-hearted man, has found that with all their lovable qualities the Boers have retained colour prejudice "both in Church and State. It has been established with a rigidity that seems almost impossible to break down." † Elsewhere he has observed : "The colour prejudice is very deep indeed, when really good and kindly people

\* See book-reviews in the *Literary Guide* for July, 1937.

† *The Spectator*, June 6, 1931.

justify it on the ground of their most cherished religious beliefs." \* The treatment of the Bantus and Indian settlers in South Africa by white races is disgraceful. The humiliations experienced there by Mr. Gandhi as a mild Hindu barrister produced in him a mental revolt which culminated in his wonderful transformation as Mahatma Gandhi, the leader of rejuvenated India, who commands the respect of the West. Sir Syed Reza Ali, Agent to the Governor-General, who arrived in Bombay on March 5, 1938, in an interview to the Associated Press, declared that the amount of racial prejudice prevailing in South Africa was appalling. Mr. W. F. Bailey, F. R. G. S., has stated in the *Nineteenth Century and After* for February 1906 that there are in South Africa many white men who boldly deny that the black man is any more a human being than a baboon. The children of Negroes and Australian natives are called "piccaninnies." Writing about the Australian blacks in her "Sketches of Australian Life," Mrs. Campbell Praed states: "They are regarded as little above the level of brutes, and in some cases destroyed like vermin." The Rev. C. F. Callaway, an S. P. G. Missionary in South Africa, has stated that "there is an absolute and almost bitter refusal on the part of white Christians to mingle in any kind of fellowship with black Christians." † The same observer has said that "the one impulse which apparently has power to conquer the spirit of antipathy is lust." Of the treatment in America of the Negroes,

\* *The Modern Review* for August, 1927.

† *The East and the West* for January 1910.

who are all Christians, the less said the better. The law of America treats the Negro more harshly than anything else. It is impossible for him to get justice. \* Negroes have their separate churches and separate vehicles in railway trains, called "jim-crows." The native races of Australia have been partly and those of Tasmania completely exterminated. Mr. G. E. Lindquist has observed in his book on "The Red Man in the United States" (New York, Doran) that the antagonism of the Seminole (Florida) Indians to Christianity "has been largely due to their identifying the white man's perfidy with the white man's religion."

Mr. Labouchere, the eminent journalist and humanist, wrote in *Truth* in April, 1899 :

As a question of colour it is perfectly indifferent to me whether I am white, black, yellow, red or brown ; although as a matter of personal taste I prefer the bronzed colour of a Red Indian. But in view of the present attitude of white men towards those of other colours, I am glad to have been born white. On the west coast of Africa we are perpetually engaged in civilising expeditions, which consist in burning the villages of the black men and firing at them. In East Africa, we have, in the last few months, been civilising some 20,000 dark brown Soudanese off the face of the globe. The United States are carrying out the white man's civilising mission in the Philippines by slaughtering the yellow inhabitants, because they have the effrontery to wish to be independent of American rule. In Samoa we and the Americans are throwing shot and shell into the villages of light brown people in order to show the Germans that they must not be allowed to have their own way there. In China all white men are quarrelling over the spoil, each being determined to show the others that everyone has rights there

\* *The Review of Reviews* for December 1912.



except the yellow Chinese. All this is being done in the interests of white civilisation and so distrustful are the philanthropists themselves of each other that they are adding gun to gun, ship to ship and soldier to soldier in case any one of them should get the better of the others in their humanising mission.

One thing that Christianity has certainly failed to accomplish is the introduction of a spirit of universal brotherhood. Coleridge said that if a man begins by loving Christianity better than truth, he will continue by loving his sect or Church better than Christianity and he will end by loving himself best. An Englishman has seriously expressed in the press his disbelief in universal brotherhood. He has said: "I am at a loss to appreciate the idea of a universal brotherhood of man. There never was such a society as all history will testify—and my candid opinion is that there never, never will be one." \*

It is true that in the history of Christendom no trace of brotherhood on a universal scale is discernible. The rule followed by western people is well expressed in the lines :

The good old rule  
Sufficeth them, the simple plan,  
That they should take who have the power  
And they should keep who can.

In ordinary life men follow the principle of Judge Haliburton's Sam Slick, "Always make a nigger feel he's a nigger, or he will grow saucy." An Englishman told the Rev. C. F. Andrews: "The fact is the only thing

\* *The Statesman* Nov. 12, 1933.

the East really understands is force. It is because we have forgotten this that India is slipping out of our hands, and Kenya also. If we were only *men*, as we were in Nicholson's time, India would soon 'come to heel.' \* Speaking at a meeting of the Indian Empire Society on December 11, 1930, Mr. Winston Churchill said : "Gandhism and all it stood for finally crushed. It was no use trying to satisfy a tiger with cat's meat."

When the Government of India Act was on the tapis a retired British Civilian who is an M. A. and formerly Exhibitionist, Merton College, Oxford, wrote : "If the Archbishop of Canterbury would devote a little more time to religion, and a little less to politics he could have quoted two instances from the Bible, in which it would have been better if promises had not been kept. One is that of Jephtha's daughter described in the 11th chapter of the book of Judges and the other is that of Herod and John the Baptist described in the 14th chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew." In the same connection a more eminent Englishman, Lord Salisbury, who is noted for his piety, said in the course of a public speech in June 1933 : "When you have to form an opinion upon the Indian question, do not bother yourself too much about the pledges. You have to consider the subject on its merits. Even if we are pledged it will be absurd, owing to the pledge, to confer upon India something which will be very bad for the people of India and which will be impossible to work,

\* *The Modern Review* for February, 1924.

having regard to what is good for the people of India in this respect." \*

It will be difficult to reconcile such mental attitude on the part of some of the finest specimens of the white race, noted for its spirit of independence. To understand it one must take cognizance of the important fact that the people of Great Britain are noted for their devotion to religion and of the still more important fact that their education has always been under the strict control of the Church. As Mr. Edmond Holmes, an authority in English educational affairs, has said: "The education which the Church has practised for more than a thousand years, and which Christendom, following the lead of the Church, has accepted as orthodox, is on principle dogmatic, dictatorial and severely disciplinary, the discipline which it enforces being that of quasi-military drill." † Colonel Arthur Osburn, D. S. O., has observed about the Englishman's arrogance and hard-heartedness, about which we Indians have a lot of experience: "Is there any cause in nature that makes these hard hearts?" His own answer is: "Yes, the English public schools." India, he adds, serves as a continuation course of education with a practical bias taken out after the grounding in brutality given at the Public Schools. ‡ As we have been told by Father J. S. M. Ward of Christ the King, New Barnet: "It is from the secondary and Public Schools that the bulk of the leaders of the nation are drawn,

\* *The Statesman* June 9, 1933.

† *The Hibbert Journal* for April 1926

‡ "Must England Lose India?"

alike in State, industry and the professions." \* Mr. H. G. Wells said on September 3, 1937 as President of the section on Educational Science at the Nottingham meeting of the British Association : "I believe that the crazy combative patriotism that plainly threatens to destroy civilization today is very largely begotten by the school-master and schoolmistress in their history lessons." A sense of superiority is inculcated in the minds of young Britons while at school and it sticks to them through life. Grant Allen wrote in a letter which is reproduced in the Biography of Alfred Russel Wallace : "I am afraid the fact cannot be blinked that most Englishmen don't mind oppression, as long as the oppressed people are only blacks."

Sadism is an element in human nature which derives pleasure from being cruel to others. We read in the Bible : "It is a burnt offering, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord." Referring to the eternal torments of unbelievers and non-believers in hell, St. Thomas Aquinas said in the 13th century : "In order that nothing may be wanting to the felicity of the blessed spirits in heaven, a perfect view is granted them of the tortures of the damned." Dr. David Forsyth stated in a lecture at the Royal Society of Medicine : "The sadism of Christianity was evident in its cruel treatment in the past of the unorthodox, including the slaughter of heretics." † In connection with the Indian administration Lord Lawrence wrote in a letter to the

\* quoted in the *Literary guide* (London) for January 1935.

† reported in *The Times* of November 14, 1932.

Secretary of State for India: "If anything is done or attempted to be done to help the natives a general howl is raised which reverberates in England and finds sympathy and support there. I feel bewildered sometimes what to do." Lord Curzon has stated in "British Government in India": "Some Viceroys have interfered openly, to protect natives from violence or outrage at the hands of the white man. Lord Lytton essayed the task; the writer exposed himself at one time to considerable obloquy from his countrymen for a renewal of the effort, and exaggerated accounts were circulated of his alleged partisanship in notorious cases." In Lord Minto's time the British rulers demanded more power in order to crush the rising spirit (which unfortunately took a reprehensible course) of educated Indians against the ill-effects of bureaucratic rule. The demand was strongly supported by the Viceroy; but it was turned down by the Secretary of State, Lord Morley, who, as a Rationalist and Humanist, did not believe in the cult of force. The administrators, afterwards, had their way. The late Mr. E. S. Montagu, who belonged to the school of Lord Morley, said in the House of Commons, in the course of the debate on General Dyer that "if once he (the Indian) imbibes the ideas of individual liberty, which are dear to the British people, why, then you class him as an educated Indian and an agitator." In more recent times Lord Morley was scorned by Sir Henry Craik, the Home Member of the Viceregal Executive Council, as "a statesman of the doctrinaire school of liberal thought." How far the doctrine of force in the administration of India will finally succeed remains to be seen.

\*Our beloved Queen Victoria was no believer in force. She wrote : "Our system of sending out.....people who merely get appointed for passing an examination must be altered, or we shall have some much more serious trouble in India. There is no doubt, from what the Queen hears from many sides, that the natives (though they are very loyal to the Queen Empress and the Royal Family) have no affection for the English rule, which is one of fear, not of love and this will *not* answer for a conquered nation." \* But the general opinion in Britian is based on the Biblical doctrine of force and revenge and has been clearly expressed by the Rev. Dr. Thomas Arnold, the famous Headmaster of Rugby, one of the greatest of the English Public Schools, in the remarkable words : "In a world made up of Christians and non-Christians, the latter should have no rights." † It is clear that even if it be possible for all sects of Christians to forget their past discord and become brothers in the right sense any conception of brotherhood between Christains and non-Christains must be ruled out. Sir James Jeans, a scientist who remains a Christian, said at the Science Congress held in Calcutta last cold weather that science transcends all national and racial boundaries ; but he could not say that of his own religion. In England it has been left to a band of Humanists to form a Society to promote Human Equality, the object of which is "to insist on human equality as an ethical ideal,

\* Buckle's "Letters of Queen Victoria," vol. II, 1931.

† Life of Thomas Arnold by Rev. R. J. Campbell.

to advocate the greatest possible measure of economic equality between all human beings, and to support all practical measures directed to that end." \*

M. Anatole France has thus expressed himself in one of his "Lectures" :

The European powers have accustomed themselves whenever any breach of order occurs in the great Empire of China, to send out troops—either one power independently or several in combination--which troops restore order by means of theft, violence, plunder, slaughter, and incendiarism and pacify the country with guns and cannon. The unarmed Chinese do not defend themselves or defend themselves badly. They are slaughtered with agreeable facility. They are polite and ceremonious, but we reproach them with want of goodwill towards Europeans. Our complaint against them is of the same nature as M. Duchaillu's complaint of the gorilla. The gentleman shot a female gorilla. She died clasping her young one to her breast. He tore the young animal from the mother's arms and dragged it after him across Africa to sell it in Europe. But it gave him just cause for complaint. It was unsociable. It preferred dying of hunger to living in his society and refused to take food...It is generally acknowledged that the yellow races are not sufficiently advanced to imitate the white so exactly. It is regarded as doubtful whether they can ever rise to such a height of moral culture. How is it possible for them, indeed, to possess our virtues? They are not Christians.

#### IV. WOMAN IN THE BIBLE.

The Bible may well be expected to show the high-water mark of achievement in assigning to woman her proper place. But in some important respects it falls short of our expectations. The first chapter of the first book

\* The Society has its office in 4a Inverness Place, London, W. 2.

of Moses tells us of the creation. In it we find it said : "And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness." It is further said : "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him : male and female created he them." The last six words are strangely out of keeping with the context. Another account of the creation is contained in the second chapter. In this place better attention is paid to woman. It is said that while God, after making man from the dust, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and thereby made him a living soul, he formed the woman by taking a part of Adam's body by something like a surgical operation, and it appears that God did not put the breath of life into the woman to make her a living soul. Adam thus enjoyed advantages which were denied to Eve. When the time for passing sentence came God inflicted severer punishment on woman than upon man. Even the devil got off more lightly. Man was condemned to labour for his livelihood—a punishment which woman had to share with him to the full. The separate sentence on woman was : "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception : in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children : and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." The use of chloroform as an anaesthetic in accouchement cases in the 19th century was violently opposed by the clergy. A pious clergyman wrote : "Chloroform is a decoy of Satan, apparently offering itself to bless woman, but in the end will harden society and rob God of the deep, earnest cries which arise in time of trouble for help." It is stated by Professor R. A. Gregory in "Discovery of the Spirit and Service of Science" : "It was not



until Queen Victoria had herself taken chloroform during a confinement that the clamour of a section of the clergy began to give way before the voice of wisdom and experience." The discreditable treatment of women by God's favoured men like Abraham, Isaac, Lot and David cannot justify the claim of the Bible to be the Word of God. Abraham and Isaac prostituted their wives, Lot defiled his daughter and David who was a man after God's own heart treated the wife of his servant Uriah the Hittite in a way that can only be described as abominable. Abraham was especially favoured by God, who extended his favours to Abraham's son Isaac. "Lot found grace in God's sight. We have already referred to the way in which Moses the law-giver treated the women of Midian. The English rhymester is quite outspoken :

"Solomon and David so say divines,  
Had many wives and many concubines ;  
Yet neither of them had the slightest qualms,  
One wrote the Proverbs and t'other wrote the Psalms."

The Hebrew term for husband—*baal*—means "owner" or "master," and for wife—*beulah*—means "owned." Power of life and death over daughter seems to have been in the father's hands during patriarchal times, as is illustrated by the story of Jephthah's daughter (Judges xi). A further sign that the daughter was regarded as her father's property is shown in the fact, that if any man injured her, compensation was to be paid to the father. (Exod. xxii, Deut. xxii.) The position of a childless wife was unhappy. Sarah, Rachel and Leah each gives one of her maids to her husband. G. B. Shaw states in

"Getting Married : a Disquisitory Play", that English marriage law is really founded on "the morality of the tenth commandment, which English women will one day succeed in obliterating from the walls of our churches by refusing to enter any building where they are publicly classed with a man's house, his ox and his ass, as his purchased chattel. In this morality female adultery is malversation by the woman and theft by the man, whilst male adultery with an unmarried woman is not an offence at all."

Polygamy looms large in the Bible. In 2 Sam. xii it is said : "Thus sayeth the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee (David) King over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul : and I give thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom." There is no general prohibition of polygamy in the Bible ; but it is laid down in 1 Tim. iii, where the qualifications of a bishop are set forth, he must be husband of one wife. Polygamy was allowed though monogamy was practised generally in the Middle Ages. Luther said : "It is impossible for me to condemn a man for having more than one wife at a time, seeing that the Holy Scriptures do not forbid it." The Jews of Spain practised bigamy to some extent as late as the 14th century as Miss E. M. White tells us in "Woman in World History" (London : Herbert Jenkins). Charlemagne, crowned "Emperor of Rome" by the Pope in 800, was married to two wives at one time, and possessed many concubines. Woman was to the Hebrews an inferior being, the cause of Man's Fall, a fragment detached from Adam. The shadow of the Hebraic ideal fell upon the Christian Church. Mrs.

F. Cady Stanton says in the introduction to her "Woman's Bible": "The canon and civil law, Church and State, priests and legislators, all political parties and religious denominations, have alike taught that woman was after man, of man and for man, an inferior being, subject to man." Miss E. M. White has observed in her book that Jesus showed woman consideration, but that his teachings contained no rules for women, no prohibitions for their guidance, no division of duties and no assignments of a special sphere for them. Once, indeed, he addresses his mother in an undignified way, telling her "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" The Pauline Epistles treat all sexual relations as evil, and only tolerate marriage as less evil than fornication. Tertullian, the first of the Latin Fathers (2nd century after Christ), says to woman: "You are the devil's gateway—you are she who persuaded him (Adam) whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack...On account of you even the son of God had to die." (*De Habitu Muliebri*). St. Augustine says: "What does it matter whether it be in the person of mother or sister: we have to beware of Eve in every woman." St. Ambrose, another leader of Latin Christianity, held that woman is better fitted for bodily work, because "God took a rib out of Adam's body, not a part of his soul, to make her." When St. Ambrose is asked why woman must veil herself in the churches, while her husband does not, he answers because "she was not made to the image of God, like men." It was stated in a report on marriage and sex issued by a Committee of the Lower House of Convocation of Canterbury in June 1932: "In the past there

has been a tendency in some great Christian teachers to regard no gratification of the sexual instinct as unmixed with evil." Luther expressed his humanity in the following language : "If a woman becomes weary or at last dead from bearing that matters not, let her only die from bearing, she is there to do it." The idea of essential wickedness of sex has been traced by Mr. Willam Brand in "Sacrifice to Attis" (Heinmann) from its origin in the Christian Church. Christ said very little on sexual matters, and sexual offences were not amongst those which aroused his indignation. St. Paul and St. Augustine, on the other hand, were both obsessed by the idea of sex to a degree which would now be considered pathological (anxiety hysteria). Thus the Catholic church came to teach that celibacy is a higher state than marriage. John Wesley believed that love was a sin. He had fought sometimes with an almost super-human intensity, against love which, he conceived, might turn him from his God-given work. Lecky has shown in his "History of European Morals" that in the whole feudal legislation of England "women were placed in a much lower position than in the Pagan Empire." Lady Florence Dixie has said : "Name to me one single Pope or ecclesiastic of either Catholic or Protestant denomination who has condemned the Bible's command that woman should be held in bondage or who has spoken out on her behalf, and declared that man's rights are hers, and that the only possible saviour of mankind is woman free. I ask the impossible, for, since Christianity was established no cleric has so spoken." The Duchess of Atholl observed in 1924 : "Forty years ago the ideal

wife was the one who said 'amen' to her husband whenever he opened his mouth. Today that ideal has been abandoned and in its stead we have something different, an ideal of comradeship, of a partnership in life's happiness and difficulties alike." The Report on Church Doctrine submitted by the Anglican Commission of 1922 and recently published has rejected the theory which has prevailed so long in Christian doctrine that sexual nature is inherently sinful.

The status of women has been improved in recent years by the Sex Disqualification Removal Act of 1919, by their enfranchisement and by the passing, in 1923, of a law which puts an end to the differentiation between the sexes in regard to divorce. It was stated in the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* of November 25, 1932: "Oxford has allowed women to be full members of the University. At Cambridge they are not so: and though they take the examinations they do not get the consequent degrees." The *Times Weekly Edition* of May 9, 1935 wrote: "The reign of King George V has seen more striking changes in the status of women, both in their relationship to the State and as individuals, than any other period in history. Politically women have obtained first a measure of equality, then universal adult suffrage with a right to seats in the House of Commons." In this direction also the so-called Word of God has grievously disappointed us.

## V. THE BIBLE AND THE ANIMAL WORLD.

The position of the lower animals in the Christian scheme is extremely pitiable. It is stated in the Bible

that in creating them God gave them life without a soul and gave man complete control over them. In this respect their position was as bad as that of woman. Lecky, the great English historian, has stated in his "History of European Morals": "The animal being altogether external to the scheme of redemption was regarded as beyond the range of duty; and the belief that we have any kind of obligation to its members has never been inculcated—has never, I believe, been even admitted by Catholic theologians." Pope Pius IX, in the 19th century, refused to sanction a society for the prevention of cruelty to animals on the ground that it was an error to suppose that Christians owed any duties to dumb creatures. The Catholic position has been thus clearly set forth by Mr. J. Keating: "The first truth to establish in our own minds is that the difference between the soul of the lowest man and the living principle of the highest animals is one of 'kind' and not merely of degree. ....Animals are not persons but exist to serve the lawful purposes of man, and are therefore freely and justly subordinated to his interests." \*

A different view has been expressed by Schopenhauer in the "World as Will and Idea":

I may mention here another fundamental error of Christianity, an error which cannot be explained away, and the mischievous consequences of which are obvious every day. I mean the unnatural distinction Christianity makes between man and the animal world, to which he really belongs. It sets up man as all-important and looks upon animals as merely things. Brahmanism and Buddhism, on the

\* *The Month* for July 1935.

other hand, true to the facts, recognise in a positive way that man is related to the whole of nature, and especially and principally, to animal nature, and in their systems man is always represented, by the theory of metempsychosis and otherwise, as closely connected with the animal world.

Professor Haeckel has stated in his "Riddle of the Universe" :

Christianity has no place in that well-known love of animals that sympathy with nearly related and friendly mammals (dogs, horses, cattle etc.) which is urged in the ethical teaching of many of the older religions, especially Buddhism. Whoever has spent much time in the South of Europe must have often witnessed those frightful sufferings of animals which fill us, friends of animals, with the deepest sympathy and indignation and when one expostulates with these brutal Christians on their cruelty, the only answer is, with a laugh : "But they are not Christians." c

All suffering that is inflicted merely for our pleasure, distraction, and even for our convenience, as distinct from our preservation is an abomination. \* Sir Harry Johnston, the well-known explorer, described fox-hunting in the pages of the *Nineteenth Century* in 1913 as one of the most foolish and unprofitable of the hundred religions—each with its shibboleths—followed by the upper classes in England. "Look at what the hunt is to us : A great traditional sport, the beauty of the earth, the freshness of nature, the happy combination of men, horses and dogs. Yes, the good will, the common object, the splendid excitement of the chase ; courage, skill ; the episode, the adventure. It's English. Yes, it's English. It is part of our history. It is undying. It's English." †

\* These words are taken from Mr. John Galsworthy.

† *The Manchester Guardian Weekly*, January 26, 1934.

Writes Sir H. Rider Haggard : "The common idea of amusing the English boy is to give him a gun and send him out to kill. As I chance now in my age to have developed strong views as to all this slaughter of the helpless lower animals, I think that it would be well to inculcate more mercy in the young."

The English idea has been faithfully expressed in the following lines in "Poems for Children" by Walter de la Mare :

Hi ! handsome hunting man  
Fire your little gun.  
Bang ! Now the animal  
Is dead and dumb and done.  
Nevermore to peep again, creep again, leap again,  
Eat or sleep or drink again. O what fun !

A few years ago Mr. Bertram Lloyd, the Secretary to the National Society for the Abolition of Cruel Sports, sent a courteous appeal to the new Headmaster of Eton to bring Eton College into line with the growing humanitarian spirit of the age by abolishing the sport of beagling there. The hunt was at the time in full swing there despite the fact that, to quote the author of "Hunting", a classic of sport in the "Badminton serious", there is no more pitiful, more helpless object "than a thoroughly tired out hare hopping the last fifty yards of its career in front of the pack."

"Everywhere" wrote the *Pioneer*,\* "throughout the world wild animal life is rapidly disappearing before the advance of civilisation." Dean Inge has said : "We

\* January 7, 1926.



have devastated the loveliness of the world ; we have exterminated several species more beautiful and less vicious than ourselves ; we have enslaved the rest of the animal creation, and have treated our distant cousins in fur and feathers so badly that beyond doubt, if they were able to formulate a religion, they would depict the devil in human form."

Hunting and blood sports continue to be as popular in Britain as ever. Foxes are preserved in order that they may be hounded to death at particular seasons by the wealthiest men and women of England.

"The fact cannot be blinked," says the Rev. Dr. Walter Walsh, an American Unitarian, "that neither Judaism nor Christianity has given official sanction to the Humanitarian Movement." Dean Inge has referred to the progress of humane ideas as the "newly enlightened moral sense." Darwin has quite truly observed that sympathy for lower animals is one of the noblest virtues with which man is endowed and that it is a virtue of recent growth in Christendom. Addressing the British Science Guild on Scientific Ethics in 1927, Dean Inge admitted that Science through the theory of evolution, has had a salutary effect in effecting a change in the attitude towards the lower animals and that the rigidly static Catholic Church could claim no credit in that respect. Nor could his own Church.

In August 1926, a meeting of some enlightened English people was held at Lynton to protest against cruel sport generally and against the favourite British sport of stag-hunting in particular. A letter was read at this meeting

from Mr. Eden Phillpotts, who is a Rationalist author and who wrote : "In many cases their fathers are past praying for, but let us try and tempt the children away from those coarse and cowardly pleasures." A letter was also read from Mr. John Galsworthy who wrote : "I have come to abominate the thought of stag-hunting."

Mr. I. Giberne Sieveking writes : "It is an unassailable truth that if you look for the last remains of barbarity in a civilized nation, you will find them in their sports. But I confess that to me it is difficult to justify a *woman's* love of sport when it is combined—before her very eyes—with the suffering of an animal. Yet, I heard only the other day of a woman who boasted that she had been among the few 'in at the death' one day in fox-hunting, and that when the brush was given to her, her face was *spattered with the blood of the fox*." \*

"No civilization is complete," said our beloved Queen Victoria, "which does not include within its sphere of charity and mercy the dumb and defenceless of God's creatures." The good Queen's great-grandson, H. R. H. Edward, Prince of Wales, whose humanism proved utterly intolerable to British orthodoxy, wrote in 1935 in his foreword to "The History of the R. S. P. C. A." : "A hundred years ago animals had but few friends even in this country." H. R. H. indicated a time when orthodoxy held Britain more firmly in its grip than now.

\* "Memoirs and Letters of Francis W. Newman," by I. Giberne Sieveking (London : Kegan Paul), p. 271.

## VI.. THE BIBLE AND THE MORAL PROBLEM.

Teachers of Christianity hold that morality cannot be dissociated from their religion which constitutes its source. That is to be expected where the Bible is believed to be a Divine revelation. Green has told us in his *History of the English People* that between the middle of Queen Elizabeth's reign and the meeting of the Long Parliament, the English became the people of a book and that book was the Bible. There was yet little reading, for books were scarce and few were able to read. It has been said that, on the whole, the Churches have maintained standards and have, through the use of the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer and a variety of the forms of worship, permeated English institutions, literature and thought with the teachings of the prophets and of Christ. \* Mr. William Jennings Bryan, the American politician who was a typical Fundamentalist, declared : "The Bible is our only standard of morality."

Christian morality starts with the dogma that man's nature is subject to evil, and that we enter life weighted with a predisposition to sin. The best man that treads the earth must go to hell unless he accepts Christ's offer of salvation, and the worst will go to heaven if he does. Logically, religion's concern is with Adam's immorality, and not that of his descendants. The Bible says that the heart of man is "deceitful above all things" and "desperately wicked." † That this sin-innate dogma offends

\* Dr. Albert Mansbridge, I.L. D., in the *Hibbert Journal* for July 1928.

† Jeremiah xvii. 9.

against the feelings of thinking men is shown in a letter addressed in February, 1938, to a London morning newspaper by Professor A. M. Low who wrote : "The report of the Commission of Christian Doctrine states that man is now definitely under the influence of a bias towards evil. Are we to understand, therefore, that the Almighty is waging a perpetual and unsuccessful war against evil forces which are in the ascendant?" According to a British Rationalist: "The truth is that the mind of Europe has been vitiated by the dogma of the Fall. All that is evil and brutal in life and history has been ascribed to 'human nature'." \* "The Bishop of Bradford (the Right Rev. A. W. F. Blunt) indeed finds himself faced by the unpleasant fact that "many Christians have waged wars, many of them in the name of religion, and the Church has condoned many wars and encouraged and even prompted some"; and he proceeds to find an explanation by asserting that "the power of sin has been and is at work within the Church as well as outside." † Such, indeed, is the gloomy view of Christian believers. But after all, thanks to a benevolent God, life is a great and beautiful thing. In the opinion of a distinguished English writer ethics are independent of theological mysteries and "would subsist to all eternity though Christianity and every other form of religion should vanish away." §

\* "The Religion of Woman," by Joseph McCabe. According to Islam man is born sinless ; he is not at all accountable for the sins of his ancestors. Nor can he get his own sins expiated by others (Maulvi Abdul Karim in "Prophet of Islam and his Teachings.")

† *The Spectator*, February 16, 1932.

§ W. S. Lilly in "Right and Wrong."

A disagreeable aspect of the hell doctrine has been thus set forth by Professor J. B. S. Haldane, F. R. S., in the "Rationalist Annual" for 1936 :

History shows that this doctrine leads to oppression and cruelty. For one cannot long continue to believe that one is bound for hell and preserve his sanity. But one can readily believe it of others ; and it is an excellent excuse for interfering with them if one happens to be a power addict.

The vile heathen all over the world has bitter experience of the dreadful oppression and cruelty which this doctrine has engendered.

A belief postulating as necessary for salvation the shedding of innocent blood is not only unbecoming but repugnant to our sense of justice.

Justice has been described as the great keystone of the moral arch. As such it should take precedence of all other virtues. We have already dealt, in the preceding pages, with the dispensation of justice by Jehovah and by Christ as recorded in the Bible. Dean Inge has observed in "The Faith and the War" : "If what we see of the ways of God with man on this earth is all that there will be to see, justice counts for very little in His dealings."

The influence of the religion of the Bible has manifested itself in a variety of ways in the world's history. Thus, Sir Norman Angell has stated in "The Fruits of Victory":

Some of the worst crimes against justice have been due to the very fierceness of our passion for righteousness—a passion so fierce that it becomes indiscriminating and unseeing. It was

the passion for what men believed to be religious truth which gave us the Inquisition and the religious wars.....it was the righteous loathing for negro crime which has made lynching possible for half a century in the United States, and which prevents the development of an opinion which will insist on its suppression.

A few of the more glaring acts of injustice to be found in the Bible may be recalled. God cursed the earth for the sin of Adam and directed that the ground shall bring forth thorns and thistles, although the earth had done no wrong. God cursed the unborn descendants of Adam to undergo misery for no fault of their own. God afterwards conceived the idea of saving the progeny of Adam from their terrible doom; but the idea did not occur to him till after thousands of years during which millions of human beings perished without hope of salvation; and when, at long last, it did materialise it had very limited application so that even God's chosen people, the Jews, for whose special benefit the redemption scheme was devised, refused to avail themselves of it. God's action in taking the Jews as his chosen people and in showing them special favour, and in placing them in a specially-favoured position as against other human races cannot but be regarded as the negation of justice. Christ's utterances which show his bias in favour of the children of Israel are incompatible with justice. His action in withering away a fig-tree for failing to appease his hunger by providing him with fruit out of season, indicates a mood which is very far away from a sense of justice. The imposition by him of the doom of eternal torment in hell on unbelievers is a glaring act of injustice. Then he did an injustice to men by advising them to give up all worldly affairs

and to spend their time in devotional exercise on the assurance that the end of this world was very near, although, as a Divine Being, he must have known that the end of the world was not near when he spoke. "Take no thought for the morrow" really means (observes Sir Walter Raleigh in "Laughter from a Cloud") "Be ye improvident," whatever may be said to explain it away. In fact, Sir Walter adds, any popularization of the Gospels always has been, and as far as can be foretold always must be, something of a parody.

Let us see how the cause of truth has fared under the Bible religion. We have it from Cardinal Newman that "the Greek fathers thought that when there was a *justa causa*, an untruth need not be a lie." St. Chrysostom laid down the following principle of conduct in his work "On the Priesthood":

We may find the use of deceit to be great and needful, not only in war but also in peace, and not in affairs of State only but also at home—by the husband towards the wife, and by the wife towards her husband, and by the father towards the son, and by friend towards friend, and even by children towards a father.

Eusebius, who is held to be the most reliable Christian historian of the fourth century, has declared that he has in his history omitted whatever might tend to the dishonour of the Church and has magnified whatever conduces to her glory. \* Jean Le Clerc, a Swiss Protestant theologian, wrote: "An ecclesiastical historian ought to adhere inviolably to this maxim—that

\* See T. H. Perrycoste's "On the Influence of Religion on Truthfulness." (London: Watts, 1913.)

whatever can be found favourable to heretics is false and whatever can be said against them is true." \* Mr. Hilaire Belloc has recently laid down the proposition that "true history is history written in accordance with Catholic philosophy." † No wonder Canon Streeter, an enlightened Protestant theologian, has observed that "the conscience of Europe has been and is shocked by the failure of the Church to appreciate the supreme moral value of truth." Mr. George Santayana, the American philosopher, has likewise observed: "Religion too often debauches the morality it comes to sanction, and impedes the science it ought to fulfil." ‡ Gladstone wrote in his Diary in 1860: "There is one proposition which the experience of life burns into my soul; it is this, that man should beware of letting his religion spoil his morality."

A remarkable aspect of Christian morality is disclosed in Cardinal Newman's *Apologia* where he denounces and abjures the proposition that there is a right of private judgment and the proposition that there are rights of conscience. An English paper of standing has observed: "The right to private judgment was and still is, in fact the idea which is at the root of Protestantism, even though some Protestant Churches have been as authoritarian as the Papacy itself." §

\* Hallam's "Introduction to the Literature of Europe," vol. ii, p. 95.

† "The Rationalist Annual" 1933, p. 42.

‡ "The Life of Reason or the Phases of Human Progress."

§ *The Manchester Guardian Weekly*, March 3, 1929.



Christians believe that human nature is essentially combative. We are told of man's sinful nature and of the "natural vindictiveness of mankind." Carlyle regarded the "ineradicable tendency" to revenge as a divine feeling in the mind of every man and as a "monition sent to poor man by the Maker Himself." Speaking on the occasion of his own installation as Rector of Glasgow University, in 1923, Lord Birkenhead (who is remembered by the people of India as one of India's great stewards who believed in the cult of force) stated that from the dawn of history man has been a combative animal. That, indeed, is the general idea in Christendom. In a sermon preached in 1928, Dean Inge said: "One cause of perverted patriotism is the native pugnacity of the human being, and it has been thought by many that the European is the most pugnacious of all the races of the world." \* The European owes his pugnacity not to his Maker, who is, in truth, a loving God and who cannot be held responsible for making man wicked by nature, but to his religious up-bringing. The researches of modern anthropologists show that man is essentially peaceful and good-natured. It is a gloomy theology that represents him as, by nature, wicked. Professor G. Elliot Smith, F. R. S., has shown in his Conway Memorial Lecture for 1927 on "Human Nature" that the writings of a long series of travellers and ethnologists with reference to uncultured peoples have made it clear that the original qualities of mankind exhibit no taint of wickedness, and that the primitive peoples are in fact peaceful, happy, good-natured,

\* *The Indian Review* for November 1928, p. 794.

faithful and kind to their wives and indulgent and considerate to their children and possess a natural sense of right and justice and are truthful and honest. Having no property, they are free from the temptation of greed and envy. Being on terms of equality with their fellows, causes of jealousy are rare. But, Professor Elliot Smith adds, they are quick to resent injury or injustice. Cruelty and quarrelsomeness are not, we are further assured, due to innate qualities but are awakened in alert and quick-witted people, who are by nature not malicious, by artificial beliefs and violent practices devised by their fellows. The study of mankind clearly shows that warfare is not unavoidable and cannot be attributed to wicked human nature as formed by a "jealous God" who claims vengeance as his weapon. The conception of the "old Adam in man" is unworthy of a benevolent Deity. Sir Arthur Keith has recently observed that "since Christianity has been introduced as a *moral guide for men* wars have become increasingly inhumane." \*

The moral sanction of Christianity stands on the belief in reward for good work and punishment for evil-doing. But according to a narrower view, salvation cannot be attained by good work apart from implicit faith in Christ as the Redeemer. Let us, however, look into the question of fear and hope as motives. According to the Bible the fear of God is the beginning of Knowledge. In a primitive state man was inspired by fear. The prophets of the Old Testament urged men

\* *The Literary Guide* (London), for January, 1938.

to do good for the Lord might make them prosperous on earth. They promised to their own people the restoration of Jerusalem and the good things of the Gentiles. So, in the New Testament, as in Mark x. 30, a distinct promise is made that the sacrifice of property will be made up a hundred-fold. "Whatever Lord, we lend to Thee repaid a thousand-fold will be." So, runs an English hymn. Intellectual advancement is leaving this idea behind. Professor J. Seth has observed in his "Address to Students": "The primary virtue of the intellectual life, as it may be said to be the primary virtue of our entire life, is disinterestedness, unselfishness, disregard of the consequences, to ourselves at any rate, of doing our duty." This reflects the principle of the Hindu "Geeta."

Of the ineffectiveness of Christianity as a moral agent Herbert Spencer has said in his "Autobiography": "Much astonishment may, indeed, be felt at the ineffectiveness of threats and promises of supposed supernatural origin. European history, dyed through and through with crime, seems to imply that fear of hell and hope of heaven have had small effects on men." The eminent sociologist proceeds to observe that the European colonists out-do the law of blood-revenge among savages and massacre a village in retaliation for a single death—a fact which shows that two thousand years of Christian culture has changed the primitive barbarian very little. Mr. John Bailey in an article \* on Queen Victoria alluded to the fact that her Whig

\* *The Quarterly Review*, April, 1926.

Ministers only too often followed the system of "bullying weak countries like Greece, China and Japan, and retreating before Powers who could defend themselves." The good British Queen took a higher view of morality than is justified by the Biblical doctrine of force. Mr. Bailey stated that her temper "was not merely pacific but humane, and hated war even where it brought no dangers. Hearing of a suggestion that a Burmese village should be burned in retaliation for a massacre of a ship's crew, she desired her Ministers to set themselves utterly against the practice 'of imitating the barbarities of a half-savage people rather than of setting them the example of a policy founded on Christian principles.'" Professor J. B. S. Haldane has very rightly observed : "The theory that a wrong act deserves the infliction of suffering is part of Christian ethics, and is responsible for any amount of cruelty even today." We are beginning to see, writes an English Rationalist, the truth of Spinoza's idea that real morality is unaffected by thought of reward and punishment, present or future. Mr. Gandhi has stated, on the authority of the "Geeta", that a life of goodness is enjoined upon us, not because it will bring good to us, but because it is the eternal and immutable law of nature. The really moral man, he says, leads a life of virtue, not because it will do him good, but because it is the law of his being. According to Hindu philosophy or pantheism, man is but part of one stupendous whole, a Jivatma which is part and parcel of Paramatma. In this belief the Hindu regards himself as Son of God and is required to keep his body and soul which partake of

Divinity,, untainted by evil. This is a much higher motive than the hope of reward and fear of punishment.

Educated Hindus, taking their cue from their Christian teachers and Christian literature hold the belief that the moral precepts of Christ are unique. The Sermon on the Mount is claimed to be altogether original. Dr. Edward Greenly has said of it :

Most of the ideas of the ethic of Jesus are derived really from the Sermon on the Mount (on a plain in Luke) and from the ethical parables which are found only in Luke. Now, the mere form of "sermon" shows clearly enough that it was never delivered as a *viva voce* address, but as a compilation. A compilation, then from what? Well, it has long been known to scholars that it is a series of maxims which were current among moralists of the Mediterranean world (some appearing in the *Didache*) and is not an original composition at all. \*

Modern researches have indeed proved that many of the maxims of the Sermon on the Mount, together with passages from the Lord's Prayer, are derivative and are to be found in the Talmud.

It is asserted by Christians that the "Golden Rule" was proclaimed for the first time by Christ, who said in the Sermon on the Mount : "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Christ himself cited the old law of the Old Testament. The Greeks taught the rule several centuries before Christ. Aristotle mentioned it in the fourth century B. C. Confucius emphasised it 500 B. C. The Vedas, more than 2000 years before Christ, said : "Let him not do evil to others who desires not that sorrows should pursue himself."

\* *The Rationalist Annual* for 1927, (London : Watts).

The Mahabharat has said : "He sees truly who looks on all living creatures as his own self." The Buddhist Hinayan Canon which was committed to writing in the first century before Christ contained the same rule.

As to the morality of the Old Testament, the Rev. W. K. McKibben, who spent fourteen years as a missionary in China, wrote as follows in 1907 in a journal published by the Divinity Faculty of the University of Chicago :

If we hold to the conception of the Scriptures as an unerring rule of life and conduct, it is difficult to avoid extenuating or apologizing for the low standards of conduct of many who are held up as models. Deceit, savagery, cruelty, treachery, lewdness, bulk larger and more prominently in the narrative than we like to think.... Use and wont have made our perceptions obtuse at home, else we should not still be giving prizes to children for reading the Bible through. But in the mission-field these things stand out in all their native literalness. In China at least they stand in painful contrast to the decorum of native writings that originated in the same ancient periods, and they produce questionings always, and undisguised revulsion often. I recollect how an old (Chinese) Christian quietly collected and concealed Scripture portions containing so innocent a narrative as the Book of Ruth after we missionaries had distributed them. It was God's truth, we said, and God would take care of it. \*

He goes on to remark that "the only healthy reaction upon much of the narration" in the Bible is "disgust, repudiation." For some apt remarks on the influence of Old Testament precedents on the theory of persecution † the reader may refer to Walter Hobhouse's "the Churches and

\* "Letters to a Missionary" by R. F. Johnston.

† "Blessed are they who inflict persecution for righteousness' sake."

—St. Augustine.

the World," p. 383. That even the Church of England is beginning to awaken to the pressing nature of these considerations is shown by the decision (arrived at in 1918) of the Canterbury Convocation to discontinue the use of the imprecatory Psalms (especially Psalm 58) in public worship. Such is the character of the Book that emanates from the Godhead ! But orthodox Christians are still fighting for the maintenance of the traditional views of Scripture. As a champion of orthodoxy the Rev. H. E. Fox (who was Honorary Secretary to the Church Missionary Society) has indeed observed that "Moses and all the prophets were among the credentials to which Jesus Christ appealed" ; and he has pointed out that Jesus placed complete reliance on the Hebrew Scriptures as having emanated from His Father.

An important aspect of Christian morality has been thus dealt with by Mr. Johnston in his "Letters to a Missionary" : "The Church (I refer not merely to the Church of Rome) also does its best to boycott all literary productions that are inimical to its interests, and through its powerful organizations, its great wealth, its social and political influence, and also through the strong hold which it has over a large section of the Press, it is able to achieve very considerable success in checking the circulation and counteracting the influence of 'infidel' literature."

With the exception of the Marcan passage (Mark X. 12), the right of divorce granted to man is implicitly denied to woman in all the related passages. The curious absence of all reference to love as a real marriage bond, the silence as to the iniquity of "giving" woman in

marriage without reference to her own wishes, and the stern prohibition of re-marriage to divorced persons—all this shows how impossible the Sermon on the Mount is as a code of morals to a country which has established a Divorce Court for other causes than “fornication,” and has legalized the re-marriage of divorced persons. When Christian priests offer prayer to God at the christening of battleships, do they really love their enemies? \*

The cult of force has been adopted by Christian nations from the Bible in their administration of their over-seas colonies and dominions. “The greatest writer of our age is Mr. Rudyard Kipling whose works spread the doctrine that force is the only means, national wealth the only end.” So wrote Mr. G. M. Trevelyan in the *Nineteenth Century* for December, 1901. Mr. Arnold Bennett has expressed the view that Kipling is after all “the shrill champion of the things that are rightly doomed,” that “his vogue among the hordes of the respectable was due to political reasons and that he retains his authority over the said hordes because he is the bard of their prejudices and of their clayey ideals.” It is quite characteristic of the times, writes Mr. H. G. Wells in his famous “Outline of History,” that Rudyard Kipling should lead the youth of the middle and upper-class public of Christian Britain back to the Jungle to learn “the law.” Mr. Wells adds: “In this we have the Key to the ugliest, most

\* For these the writer is indebted to No. 11 of the Pamphlets for the Million, written by the Rev. R. Roberts and published by Watts & Co. of London.



retrogressive, and finally fatal idea of modern imperialism; the idea\* of a *tacit conspiracy between the law and illegal violence.*" The immense popularity of Kipling, who upholds the Biblical doctrine of force, in Britain, is indicated by the fact that Lord Amptill, an Indian Viceroy, said at a luncheon of the Kipling Society held in 1934: "Kipling's works will last as long as civilization." How faithfully the doctrine of force is followed by the Christian nations in Eastern lands will appear from the opinion seriously expressed by an Indian Governor, Sir Alfred Lyall: "Trevelyan said that 'force is no remedy.' Had he lived in the East, he would have learned that sometimes it is the only remedy." In India the spirit inculcated by the Bible and fostered by the English Public Schools has produced the hybrid which an Indian Law Member of the Viceregal Council has designated "Executive justice." In Bengal, under a strong Governor who was steeped to his finger tips in the doctrine of force, we have been presented with the spectacle of boys and young men charged with political offences being discharged or acquitted on trial by Courts and arrested by the Police at the door of the Court and incarcerated under Executive Ordinances which require no judicial inquiry. In India the abuse of power by the lower ranks of the Police is a notorious fact; but British members of the I. C. S. are fully convinced that the opposition of Indians of all classes to the Police arises from the perversity of the Indian character. British officers, from provincial Governors downwards, lose no opportunity to pat the policeman on the back. Thus, an I. C. S. Judge of the Patna High Court (who had been recently

elevated to the Bench of the Court) took the opportunity, in July 1934, to castigate in his judgment an Indian Sessions Judge who had commented adversely on the conduct of a Police officer, and to observe: "The police have to do their work under many difficulties, and are exposed day by day to interested opposition, uninformed criticism and malicious abuse. So the Courts should support the police"......This learned Judge imported in his judgment extraneous matter based upon generalisations made by himself upon wrong data. But he was after all a typical I. C. S. man. Another brilliant *confrere*, Mr. W. S. Lilly, has stated in "India and its Problems": "Perhaps the least satisfactory of the Government departments is the Police." Mr. E. S. Montagu, as Secretary of State for India, has much to say, in his "Indian Diary," about India as "a country where the police are everything." On January 31, 1938, at the annual Police Conference held at Patna, Colonel A. E. J. C. McDowell, Inspector-General of Police, Bihar, said: "It is a fair statement of the case to say that corruption in the Police, as in other departments, is too prevalent."

Dean Inge thus expressed himself in the *Atlantic Monthly* a few years ago: "The educated man, especially if he has a scientific training, finds it very difficult to understand the apparent indifference to truth among the majority of believers, and the general readiness to believe the most grotesque superstitions." Dean Farrar's words should be borne in mind: "No religious system will be permanent which relies mainly on the emotional and the

ceremonial, and is not based on the convictions of the intellect."

On the subject of the moral results of Christianity an eminent Christian gentleman of Calcutta, Mr. G. C. Ghosh, C. I. E., quoted in the *Anurita Bazar Patrika* of March 28, 1937, the opinion of Mr. W. E. Gladstone : "The cruelty of Christians is more cruel ; the lust of Christians is more lustful ; the animal greed of Christians is ten-fold more greedy ; and the pre-Christian times afford us no panorama of Mammon-worship to compare for a moment with our own. The luxury and worldliness of old was but child's play in relation to those of modern times."

The following excerpts from one of Dean Inge's recent literary essays published in the London "Literary Guide" for March, 1938, may be taken to indicate the trend of opinion in the educated circles of the West :

Perhaps the most astonishing thing in all ecclesiastical codes of morality is the absence of any condemnation of cruelty. Nothing shows in stronger light the greatness of the change from ecclesiastical to humanist ethics.

If a man cannot accept the teaching of the Church, he may be mistaken, but he is only exercising the right of private judgment. To say that a man will be damned for not belonging to one particular Church or sect seems to us arrogant and blasphemous.

Humanist morality seems to me to be nearer to the New Testament than the teaching and practice of the medieval Church.

The records of the proceedings of the Inquisition or the Holy Office give modern independent thinkers nightmares. Such men find it difficult to believe that civilised men could be guilty of such horrors. The idea behind this religious institution was the enforcement, in the highest interests of faith, of uniformity of opinion as to the cardinal dogmas of the Church of Rome. Its history illustrates strikingly the enormous influence of the Church in the Middle Ages on the masses of the peoples of Europe. The uglier aspects of the work of the Holy Office faithfully reflect the vengeance doctrine of the Bible. Heresy was to be suppressed at any cost. Heresy is opinion contrary to the orthodox doctrines of the Church, and it was punishable as treason. Heretics were thus liable to the death penalty. The Inquisition was set up as an ecclesiastical tribunal charged with the duty of determining whether an accused person was guilty of heresy. The power of punishing those declared to be guilty was exercised by the State. The death penalty was recognised by Pope Innocent IV in 1252. Public opinion in Europe implicitly followed the Church. The sole object of the institution was the stifling of thought. The belief that if men's opinions were subversive they should be punished with death was held as strongly by Luther and Calvin as by the medieval Church. "But the peculiar quality of the atrocities of the Spanish Inquisition is that they were done in the name of a merciful Christ." \* The Church

\* Sir John Squire in the *Illustrated London News* of January 22, 1938, p. 134.

of Rome has failed to attain its object. She has not secured the adherence of all Christians. Divisions in the Christian camp have only multiplied. Freedom of opinion is steadily, though slowly, gaining ground in the more advanced ranks of Christians. Rigid preventive methods still restrict the growth of such freedom within the Church of Rome. Mr. Vivian Phelps has stated in his "Modern Knowledge and Old Beliefs" that no Church recognizes the danger of a real knowledge of the Bible better than the Church of Rome, and she shows her insight and astuteness in discouraging Bible study. This is only one of her preventive methods.

In the chapter on "God in the Bible" we have presented the reader with the views of a Catholic Bishop of Lahore who seriously regarded the visitations of famine which carried off heathen parents in order to secure Christian salvation for their orphans and also with those of an Anglican Dean who considered the destruction of heathen life by floods as a welcome means for rice-eating people to obtain relief from chronic over-population. Such instances point a moral which found expression in a Diary entry made in 1860 by Mr. Gladstone: "There is one proposition which the experience of life burns into my soul: it is this, that man should beware of letting his religion spoil his morality."

A tree shall be known by its fruit. Raja Rammohun Roy had very great admiration for the precepts of Jesus. But the actual state of morality that he found during his visit to England produced a painful impression on his mind. It was said by Miss Harriett Martineau

that the Raja's death was hastened by the anguish he felt to see the awful living lie that practical Christianity was in its stronghold. \* In a funeral sermon preached at Bristol on November 19, 1833, in the Meeting House of the first Presbyterian Congregation, the Rev. J. Scott Porter said: "Offences against the law of morality, which are too often passed over as trivial transgressions in European society, excited the deepest horror in him." † The spirit of Christianity as manifested at the present day is still more deplorable. Writing in the *Nineteenth Century* for April, 1907, Mrs. Grossman observed: "London, which upon the surface is a comedy, is below the surface a great tragedy. The civilisation of feeling has gone only a few inches down, and beneath its crust the barbaric instincts of fighting and conquering have full play." About another striking aspect of morality a proclamation issued by the Vatican said in 1928: "Woman appears to be doing everything to destroy in herself those characteristics that make her beautiful above everything else, namely, modesty, chastity and purity." It may be doubted if woman can be justly regarded as solely responsible in this respect. The Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Lang), speaking on rescue work at the Mansion House on April 5, 1930, declared: "Multitudes of our young people of both sexes, who are supposed to be perfectly respectable, are indulging sometimes habitually in a manner which would have shamed men's conscience in the past and brought most

\* *The Modern Review* for October, 1933, p. 466.

† "The Last Days in England of Bajah Rammohun Roy," by Mary Carpenter. (London: Trubner, 1886.)

disastrous consequences to girls." This cannot but be regarded as a deplorable feature of the practical results of the religion of the Bible for which so much is claimed by those engaged in the evangelization of the heathen. According to Cardinal Hinsley the cumulative effect of two thousand years of Christian progress is that the world has returned to the deplorable condition it displayed before Christ came to save it. "We know," he says, "that human society, in large measure, is sinking back into the condition of the world before the Incarnation." This is no great performance for a Church which is supposed to shine in the world as a standing miracle.

Many noble souls in the West have, in spite of their religious upbringing, felt the need for a revised edition of the Bible in the interests of morality. Good people cannot but be shocked at passages like 2 Chron. xviii where God commands a lying spirit to deceive a man in order to entice him to destruction and death. Bowdlerized editions of the Old Testament have been issued, in the face of strong orthodox opposition, for use in schools. Of the moral influence of the Bible on children Mark Twain has stated in his "Autobiography" (vol ii. p. 335): "The mind that becomes soiled in youth can never be washed clean: I know this by my own experience, and to this day I cherish an unappeasable bitterness against the unfaithful guardians of my young life who not only permitted but compelled me to read an unexpurgated Bible through before I was fifteen years old. None can do that and ever draw a clean, sweet breath again this side of the grave." During discussion of the Psalms, at a meeting of

the House of Clergy at Westminster in 1925, the Archdeacon of Rochdale said that it went against the grain for him to hear choir boys cheerily singing some of the terrible utterances in the Psalms. But the Archdeacon of East Riding described the proposal to omit certain verses of the Psalms as barbarism and vandalism. \* In 1917 the Houses of Convocation decided by a narrow majority to revise the Psalms as used by the Churches by omitting "uncharitable and vindictive" passages. On this occasion the Archdeacon of Sudbury, in opposing the proposed revision, affirmed that "the Psalms are a mirror of human nature, which is precisely the same today as in the times of the Psalmist, and to omit the righteous call for vengeance is not only to misrepresent Christianity, but to fall out of touch with the whole moral feeling of the country." Thus is the religion of the Bible represented by one of its great interpreters. A non-Christian is naturally inclined to agree with Thomas Paine who said: "Any system of religion that has anything in it that shocks the mind of a child, cannot be a true system."

## VII EPILOGUE.

[Some knotty points concerning Christian belief have been already dealt with in the foregoing pages. A few more broad questions are mentioned below in the hope that they may be kindly considered by evangelists and by students of Christianity.]

**Ideas about the Bible :** The Rev. Dr. Joseph Parker is quoted in "The case for Secular Education," published

\* *The Statesman*. March 13, 1925.



for the Secular Education League by Watts and Co., London, 1928 : "We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that there is no Bible upon which all Christian parties are agreed. One party says that surely the historical parts of the Bible might be read ; to which another party replies that the historical parts of the Bible are especially to be avoided, because they are critically incorrect, and in many instances glaringly contradictory. One party says, Read the Bible because of its divine revelation to the human soul ; to which another party replies, the only thing that is to be distrusted is the claim on behalf of the supernatural or the ultra-historical. Some say, Read the life of Jesus ; and others say that there is no trustworthy life of Jesus to be obtained. To some the Bible is historical : to others it is ideal."

**About the Church :** The Catholic Catechism says : "The Church is the society of the faithful, established by our Lord Jesus Christ, diffused throughout the world, subject to the authority of its lawful pastors and our holy father the Pope." According to the Catholic, no one outside the "true Catholic faith" can attain salvation.

The Lutheran Catechism says : "Our Church is a holy Christian society of believers under Christ, our Master, in which the Holy Ghost, by means of the Bible and the sacraments, offers, communicates and dispenses the divine salvation."

The Orthodox (Greek) Church Catechism says : "Our Church is a society established on earth by Jesus Christ, united by the divine doctrine and the sacraments under

the government and direction of a hierarchy established by the Lord."

What a hopeless position of uncertainty for the heathen !

About Jesus Christ : Strange as it may appear, the record of the New Testament as to the acts and utterances of the Founder of Christianity is extremely bewildering. Christ was promised to the Jews as their Messiah and Saviour. Yet, strangely, we are told in Chapter vii of the Fourth Gospel that in consequence of certain occurrences, "Jesus walked in Galilee ; for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him."

The sacrifice of Jesus, as the only begotten son of God, had been pre-ordained and pre-destined by God himself for the redemption of mankind. Yet, according to one version, while suffering on the Cross, Jesus made a bitter complaint to God for having forsaken him in his distress ; and, according to another version, Jesus showed great magnanimity by interceding on behalf of his slayers and praying to God to forgive them as they were acting in ignorance of the enormity of their offence. From neither of these two versions does it appear that Christ's sacrifice was a voluntary act with a full knowledge of God's pre-ordained salvation scheme.

Referring to the cry of "Back to Jesus," a British Rationalist wanted to know to whom he was to go back. He asked : "To the magician and wonder-worker ? To the Gnostic Logos ? To the exorcist of demons ?

To the ignorant and superstitious Jew? To the believer in the demoniacal origin of insanity and diseases, in the imminent end of the world, and in hell as an unquenchable lake of fire? To which? These different persons are all on a par in the Gospel records. Who is to decide which portion of those records, if any, is historically reliable?" (*The Literary Guide* for December, 1926).

Mr. H. G. Wells writes in "First and Last Things": "You see how I stand in this matter, puzzled and confused by the Christian presentation of Christ. I know there are many will answer that what confuses me is the overlaying of the personality of Jesus by stories and superstitions and conflicting symbols: they will in effect ask me to disentangle the Christ I need from the accumulated material, choosing and rejecting. Perhaps one may do that. They do, I know, so present Him as a man inspired, and strenuously, inadequately and erringly presenting a dream of human brotherhood and the immediate Kingdom of Heaven on earth and so blundering to his failure and death. But that will be a recovered and restored person they would give me, and not the Christ the Christians worship and declare they love, in whom they find their salvation."

**The Trinitarian Doctrine:** This constitutes another stumbling-block. Mr. W. J. Flagg writes in "Yoga or Transformation," (London: William Rider): "The construction of the Christian Trinity according to St. Augustine is as follows: 'We say, we do, that the father is the father of the son, and that the son is the son of the father, and that the holy spirit is the spirit of the father

and the son, without being either the father or the son.' Thus the Holy Ghost who, as everybody knows, begat the son is declared to have done so before he himself had existence, since as the spirit of his child he could not have had being in advance of that child." (p. 206).

Raja Rammohun Roy, on a full consideration of the Trinitarian doctrine concluded: "These facts coincide entirely with my own firm persuasion of the impossibility, that a doctrine so inconsistent with the evidence of the senses as of three persons in one being, should ever gain the sincere assent of anyone, into whose mind it has not been instilled in early education. Early impressions alone can induce a Christian to believe that three are one and one is three." (Miss Carpenter's "Last Days of Rammohun Roy," p. 214.)

Rudyard Kipling has made a Hindu maiden say :

Look, you have cast out Love ! What Gods are these

You bid me please ?

The Three in One, the One in Three ? Not so !

To my own Gods I go.

It may be they shall give me greater ease

Than your cold Christ and tangled Trinities.

The abracadabra of the Trinity is best displayed in the "Athanasian Creed" which says : "Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith. Which faith, except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the Catholic Faith is this : That he worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity. Neither confounding the Persons nor dividing the Substance. For there is one

Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost.....The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible.....There are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated, but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible."

**Christianity and Miracles:** Dean Farrar has said that it is clear to every honest and unsophisticated mind that, if miracles be incredible, Christianity is false. ("The Witness of History to Christ," 2nd. edition, p. 25). Dean Mansel has likewise stated that the entire Christian faith must stand or fall with the belief in the supernatural. ("Aids to Faith"). Bishop Westcott has said in "The Gospel of the Resurrection" that "the essence of Christianity lies in a miracle." The Catholic Church holds as an article of faith that miracles have never ceased. For a fuller examination of this subject the reader is referred to the erudite treatise of Mr. W. R. Cassels on "Supernatural Religion" and to "The Great Physician or Miracles of the Gospel Narrative" by "Juridicus" (Mr. W. R. Donough, M. A., Barr.) both published by Watts and Co., of Fleet Street, London. Of the cardinal miracles of the Bible we have already mentioned the Creation, God's Covenants with his "chosen people" and the salvation of man through a Messiah. We have seen how these miracles have turned out. The Second Advent is a miracle in expectation. Jesus twice made sure that his vision of the Kingdom of God was about to be made a reality: once, when sending forth his disciples, in Matt. x. 23, he coupled their mission with the assurance that they would

not have time to visit all the cities of Israel before the Son of Man came; and a second time when, he entered Jerusalem riding on an ass amid the acclamation of the multitude. Mr. T. R. Glover wrote in the *Daily News* in June, 1928: "I note that the Second Advent has constantly been proclaimed as imminent and as regularly it had proved tardy in realization. The Early Christians in the first century (as we are told till we are tired) lived on the basis of a speedy coming of Christ. All through the nineteenth century people kept predicting it." G. B. Shaw has written: "In 1000 A. D. the last possibility of the promised advent expired: but by that time people were so used to the delay that they readily substituted for the Second Advent a Second Postponement." In the year 1000 multitudes of Christians seriously prepared for the end of the world. John Wycliffe prophesied in his book "The Last Age of the Church" that the end of the world would take place in 1400 at the very latest. The Rev. Edward Irving, founder of the Christian sect known as the Irvingites, who died in 1834, fixed the date of the Second Advent "after the close of three years and a half of testimony of the world commencing from the 14th January, 1832." All this is bewildering to the heathen, although it presents no difficulty whatever to pious Christians. Missionaries would find their evangelistic labours lightened and would have little need for praying to God for floods and famines if they could demonstrate the truths embodied in Mark xvi. 17 and 18, or if they could exercise such power as was delegated by Christ to the seventy missionaries under Luke x. 17 and 19. We non-Christians can understand Dean Inge when he says that miracles must be relegated to the sphere of pious opinion. ("Out-

spoken Essays," p. 33). On the other hand, the marvels achieved during the last half-century through the agency of Science constitute real miracles calculated to strike wonder at the vast forces of nature hitherto hidden from man and a few of which he has so far, to some extent, controlled and turned to his own use and which force upon man the real conviction that he is ever in the presence of an Infinite and Eternal Power from which all things proceed.

**The Christian View of God :** It is a remarkable fact that Christians, whose religion is founded on the Bible as a revelation which they owe to the grace of God, have in practice so curiously depreciated God and the Old Testament which enshrine God's own teachings. They attach far greater importance to the Redeemer than to God who sent the Redeemer for the benefit of mankind. Anatole France has noticed this striking fact, which is generally overlooked, in his "Revolt of the Angels," where he points out that Jehovah gained nothing for what he had done. Anatole France writes : "It was not he, but his son, who received the homage of mankind, and who gave his name to the new cult. He himself remained almost unknown upon earth." It may be recalled that one of the various ways in which Christians have placed the Son above the Father is to amend the Decalogue in favour of the former by substituting Sunday for Saturday as the Sabbath.

**The Philosophy of Work :** A Western writer of note has observed that the Jews have won their greatest triumph over Europe by imposing their own exegesis on that continent. It cannot be doubted for a moment that they have scored heavily over the people

of Europe by securing their allegiance to the religion of the Old Testament. The inspired scribes have stated that Jehovah condemned Adam to eat his bread "in the sweat" of his face because he was so vicious as to listen to the voice of his wife in disregard of Jehovah's solemn warning. Mankind was thus cursed to labour instead of enjoying a life of restful ease. But a far more rational philosophy of work has been presented by Mr. H. W. Smith in "The Life Worth Living" :

When man began to toil, not his fall, but his salvation, was begun. When he cleared his first field of thistles, and in his work his sweat fell heavy on the rescued soil, his joy and not his sorrow began ; for labour ends in delight, and is the only mother of true rest ; and it is by what a thing ends in, and not by what it is while it is being done, that we judge the thing. Out of the noble pains of labour, struggling with all the reluctant elements of nature, have streamed into humanity all the blessings it has loved and rejoiced in—all knowledge, all discovery, the interests which awake and kindle us, poetry and art, law, civil order, the gentleness and greatness of life, the high conceptions of the imagination and all our grasp of nature. Little would we care to go on, were it not for the difficulties ; little would we care for the results, if we had not won them with trouble ; little would we care for rest, if it were not filled with the exulting memories of labour. Work is the law of our being—the living principle that carries men and nations onward.

This provides us with a far nobler conception of life and affords a much higher perception of the goodness and majesty of God than the gloomy theology founded on the third chapter of the book of Genesis.

**Conversion of Children :** There is more in the joy manifested by the Catholic Bishop who saw a Divine design in the admission into the Church of



Rome of heathen orphans left behind by parents decimated by famine, than meets the eye. We have been told by Mr. Vivian Phelps in "Modern Knowledge and Old Beliefs" that Cardinal Newman once said: "Give me the children of England, and England shall be Roman Catholic." Mr. Ernest Thurtle, M. P., has just said in "The Fellowship of Reason," with special reference to the education of English children: "It is quite natural that the Churches should fight hard to retain their grip on the minds of the children. For them it is a question of survival.\* Their adult members are falling away from them, and therefore it is more urgent than ever that they should seek to mould to their own way of thinking the plastic mind of the young." It is indeed remarkable that advanced people in the West should be ridding themselves of the religious dogmas learnt by them in their earlier years. It is no wonder at all that so many should still cling to their old beliefs. "Experience has amply proved," writes Winwood Reade, "that the minds of the highest order are sometimes unable to shake off the ideas which they imbibed when they were young." ("The Martyrdom of Man"). Missionaries in India fully understand the need of catching the heathen young. In April, 1933, there was held in London a meeting of delegates of the National Union of Teachers. At this meeting a Jesuit, discussing the progress of missions among the Hindus, pointed out that his Society gained many more converts than did the Anglican Church; for the latter spent their money on ornate places of worship, whereas the shelter of a tree would suit the Jesuit, provided he had the children. This is all very well for numerical results;

but there is the outstanding fact that in spite of all their most strenuous exertions Missionaries can get very few converts from educated Hindu adults. The following admission was made by the Bishop of Madras (the Rev. Dr. Whitehead) in the July number of the *Nineteenth Century* in 1907 : "The upper castes and the educated classes of Hindu society in towns and cities have made little or no response to the preaching of the Gospel." *Truth* wrote on September 26, 1895 : "I once asked the head of the Jesuit missions in Para whether he had ever known of a real conversion. My friend was in a candid mood, and he said a belief in any particular phase of the supernatural may be inculcated in infancy, but not in a grown-up man."

**More About Woman :** It will be observed that the Decalogue consists of directions of conduct designed for the use of men only. Thus, the tenth Commandment runs : "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's." G. B. Shaw, writing on Sex Slavery in Christendom, observes that Western marriage law is really founded on "the morality of the tenth Commandment, which Englishwomen will one day succeed in obliterating from the walls of our churches by refusing to enter any building where they are publicly classed with a man's house, his ox, and his ass, as his purchased chattels. In this morality female adultery is malversation by the woman and theft by the man, whilst male adultery with an unmarried woman is not an offence at all." \* About

\* "Getting Married : a Disquisitory Play."

the condition of woman in modern Europe, on the continent, particulars of a hideous nature will be found in "More Tramps Abroad" by Mark Twain. According to Arnaldo Cortesi the status of woman in Italy "is probably influenced somewhat by the opinions of the Vatican, which is even more conservative than are the Fascists where women are concerned. It will be recalled, for instance, that the Pope more than once has publicly protested against even the limited amount of sport for women advocated by the Fascists." \*

**The Cruelty Complex :** Instances have been given in these pages of a species of sadistic mental abnormality which may be described as the Cruelty complex. Another instance is furnished by the fact that when the use of chloroform in accouchement cases was introduced in England it was violently opposed by the clergy who relied upon Genesis iii. 16, where Jehovah curses woman to bring forth children in sorrow. A pious clergyman wrote : "Chloroform is a decoy of Satan, apparently offering itself to bless woman, but in the end it will harden society and rob God of the deep earnest cries which arise in time of trouble for help." When inoculation for small-pox was being introduced into England two hundred years ago it was met with violent opposition. A pamphlet was published condemning it as unlawful and entirely contrary to Scripture. The clergy were highly indignant at what they considered "an impious attempt to take the issues of life and death out of the hands of Providence." (*The Daily Graphic*, December 1, 1922). Dr. Jenner

\* *The Modern Review* for June, 1934, p. 63.

who introduced vaccination in 1796 went through a terrible time before the ignorance and prejudices of Christian England could be overcome. One of Jenner's opponents wrote: "The omnipotent God of nature..... has permitted Evil, Bonaparte and Vaccination to exist, to prosper, and even to triumph for a short space of time, perhaps as the scourge and punishment of mankind for their sins." (*Ibid*). Writing of the European diseases introduced into North America by the early colonists, Professor William Christie Macleod, in his work on "The American Indian Frontier," says (pp. 49, 50): "An attitude peculiar to the English colonists of North America, but taken most seriously by the Puritans, was that God had sent such diseases in advance of Christian colonization in order to wipe out the pagan population and thereby make room for his own people." He further states in the same place: "A variant opinion held by Sir Ferdinando Gorges of Maine, and by the Quaker Governor of California, maintained that God did all this spreading of disease to relieve the English of the necessity of killing off Indians by fire and sword in order to colonize the country. 'And indeed,' says the Quaker Governor, 'Providence seemed wholly to design this bloody work for the Spanish nation, and not the English, who in their natures are not so cruel as the other.' " A very good Christian, Professor B. T. Wilden Hart, wrote to the *Church Times* in September 1923 that the anxiety of those who had friends in Japan would be lessened by the consideration that "by the merciful dispensation of Providence this terrible visitation of earthquake and

fire has taken place at a season of the year when most of the white people would have left such towns as Tokyo and Yokohama."

**Some Acid Tests :** Christianity of every shade claims superiority over all other religions. The ideal and practice of brotherhood may be regarded as a fair test of the verity of this claim. Professor Westermann wrote in the *International Review of Missions* for October, 1912 : "When the negro adopts Islam, he at once becomes a member of the higher social class.....The despised bush negro becomes a man of position, whom even the Europeans involuntarily treat with respect. It is quite otherwise when a heathen joins the Christian Community.....Moreover, the Europeanised negro never obtains among the whites that social equality to which Islam admits him readily. There are Europeans who take little pains to conceal the fact that the Christian 'nigger' is as contemptible in their eyes as the bush negro, and they not seldom take every opportunity of their preference for Mahomedans." It was pointed out in the *Nineteenth Century* in 1911 by Sir Harry Johnstone that some enlightened African chiefs had encouraged the spread of the Islamic faith among their people in order that they might not fall victims to the alcohol habit which they were liable to contract from the white man. A writer in the *Islamic Review* quoted the following observation of the Rev. W. W. Cash of the C. M. S. at the Church Congress : "The brotherhood of Muslims of different races was more real than the brotherhood of Christians, and for that reason both the Pagans and the Christians of the East were going over to Mahomedanism."

Maulvi Abdul Karim has in "Prophet of Islam and his Teachings" quoted the following from Mahatma Gandhi : "Someone has said that Europeans in South Africa dread the advent of Islam that civilised Spain, Islam that took the torch-light to Morocco and preached to the world the gospel of brotherhood. The Europeans of South Africa dread the advent of Islam, for they are afraid of the fact that if the races embrace Islam they may claim equality with the white races. They may well dread it. If brotherhood is a sin, if it is equality of the coloured races that they dread, then that dread is well founded. For, I have seen that any Zulu embracing Christianity does not *ipso facto* come on a level with the Christians, while immediately he embraces Islam, he drinks from the same cup and eats from the same dish as a Mussalman. That is what they dread."

Pastor Otto Stockmayer has, in his "Wisdom from God," displayed deep faith in the Bible in saying : "The nation of Israel had been chosen by God to bless the world in bringing to it the knowledge of God's salvation. The Lord had suffered the heathen to go their own way." But he displays extreme lack of wisdom and good sense in believing it to be possible for God to select for so serious a purpose a people who (in the Pastor's own words) "became a curse instead of a blessing in the earth."

Good Christians sigh for the good old days of the past and lament the present age as one of unbelief. Serfdom is a condition only partially removed from slavery. It flourished in Europe in the good old times when

religion reigned supreme. Professor Thorold Rogers has stated in "Six Centuries of Work and Wages" that the unfortunate serf was tied down in endless ways and, among other degradations, his daughter could not marry without the consent of the lord, who frequently demanded payment for permission, or, worse still, the infamous "right of the first night" (*Jus primae noctis*). Serfdom was not removed from Western Europe till towards the close of the 18th century and from Russia in 1861.

Vivekananda, the harbinger of Indian Nationalism has said, addressing missionaries :

You come to us with your religion of yesterday—to us who were taught thousands of years ago by our Rishis precepts as noble as your Christ's ; you trample on us and treat us as the dust beneath your feet ; you destroy life in our animals ; you degrade our people with drink ; you scorn our religion, in many points like your own ; and then you wonder why Christianity makes such slow progress in India.

Another test that may be fairly applied is the amount of success attained by Christianity, as represented by the Church of Rome and the Reformed Churches, in winning the allegiance of educated men. Mr. Stanley (now Lord) Baldwin said on May 12, 1931, at the annual Assembly of the Congregational Union of the City Temple : "For over two centuries, we are told on high authority, religion has been on the defensive, and on a weak defensive." Matthew Arnold has said in the preface to his "God and the Bible" : "It is the habit of increased intellectual seriousness, bred of a wider experience and of a larger acquaintance with men's mental history, which is now transforming religion in our

country. Intelligent people among the educated classes grow more and more sceptical of the miraculous data which supply the basis for our received theology. The habit is a conquest of the advancing human race; it spreads and spreads, and will be on the whole and in the end a boon to us." In his "Farewell to London," Dean Inge wrote in the *Evening Standard* in October, 1934: "People are thinking for themselves, and that means they are becoming unorthodox, for the only way to be perfectly orthodox is not to think at all." The Bishop of Birmingham said in a sermon in Westminster Abbey in 1929: "Our Church will never win the educated world." What he said of the Church of England is certainly applicable, more or less, to all churches. There is indeed no evidence that Christ's mission of redemption has so far met with anything like complete success.

**Conclusion :** The worthy gentleman whose inspiration led the writer to prepare this booklet, is a believer in the Eternal Church which is supposed to have been founded by Christ himself for the benefit of mankind. It is a matter of no concern to that gentleman, as a good Catholic, that mankind, during the many millenniums which intervened between Adam's shameful fall and the establishment of the Eternal Church, had been sadly deprived of that benefit and that even after the foundation of that Church it has not benefitted mankind as a whole. The Rev. Father E. De Meulder, S. J., a highly esteemed Catholic Missionary, has, in agreement with Cardinal Hinsley, frankly avowed in his "Challenge of the Eternal Religion" that "never was man more separated from man than at the present day," which means that



the Church founded by Christ himself nearly two thousand years ago as the sole means by which mankind might be saved from the dire results of the original sin, has failed so far in making this a happy world. It may be urged that at the present day the Church of Rome does not exercise the influence which it at one time did and that it may even be said to be on the decline. It is true that a religion may be seen at its best in the days of its full glory. Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore has thus correctly depicted the state of things which existed when the Church of Rome was at its zenith: "When Europe's faith in the teachings of Christianity was intense, the attempt was made to prove the truth of religion by breaking men on the wheel, by burning them at the stake and by crucifying or stoning them to death." \*

The writer's Catholic friend, following the teaching of his Church, holds that the Church of Rome is a standing miracle and that the powers of hell have not prevailed against it as Jesus had foretold in Matthew xvi. 18. As an ardent Catholic believer Dr. S. B. Laha, L. M. S., late Civil Surgeon in Bihar, has observed in "An Enquiry into the Truth" that the absolute unity in the Church of Rome "is today a *standing miracle* which is in operation in this age of unbelief." But let us face the facts. The very purpose and reason of the Church's existence is no doubt the evangelization of the world. But the fact that the Church has so far failed to accomplish this purpose and the fact that it has produced such

\* *The Modern Review* for June 1934, p. 618.

deleterious moral results hardly bear out this extravagant claim. Catholics, possessed of a burning religious zeal and childlike faith, hug the idea and preach it at the top of their voice that the Church of Rome stands as the only true religion in the world ; and they believe that their Church has maintained its unity unimpaired since its foundation. Religion has its basis in faith which, as they say, moves mountains : while history, which is based on cold fact, tries to prove the truth of a proposition on rational grounds and to eliminate errors. When Christ preached his creed in the first century he sincerely believed that he would bring the kingdom of God on earth. But this hope has not been realized. After the passing of Christ his disciples began to preach the Christian creed and fundamental differences arose at once amongst them. St. Paul managed to totally eclipse the new message of Christ as to the unity of the individual soul with Divinity (which found expression in his words, "I and my father are one" and "In Him I live and move and have my being") and to cast Christianity in the Judaic mould. As time rolled on, the Christian Fathers took care more about the Church than about Christ. In the fourth century the Christian world was convulsed by the two warring creeds of Arius and Athanasius. The tension became so acute that the matter was referred to the Council of Nicea in 325 A. C. ; and Emperor Constantine voted for the creed of Athanasius. Constantine accepted this creed and when the Patriarchate was established at Constantinople this new faith also was accepted. Bitter contention arose at the outset about such fundamental doctrines as that of the Trinity and of the two Natures in the Incarnation. So, the Church of St. Sophia

guided the destinies of the eastern Christian people for centuries : and after the fall of Constantinople, in 1453, it remained as the religion of Russia. Its language was Greek. It worshipped Icons : and this Greek Church, because of its association with the Byzantine Empire, has been called the Byzantine or the Eastern or Greek Christianity. It has retained to this day its defiance of Rome. While the Church which was founded on the rock of St. Peter in Rome developed a creed which was fundamentally different from that of Constantinople. The Bishop of Rome became the Pope and he sent out missionaries to the Western countries. Thus arose the Roman Church which is called the Latin or Western Christianity and Latin became, in course of time, the language of educated Western Europe. The Popes of Rome have had a chequered history. In 1309 Pope Clement V transferred his seat from Rome to Avignon in France. With him began what is known as the Babylonish captivity of the Church. There was no election of Popes for two years (1314-16). The Pope came back to Rome in 1367. The seat was changed again to Avignon in 1370. It was again retransferred to Rome in 1377. Two rival Popes reigned simultaneously during what is called the Great Schism (1378-1417)—one at Rome and the other at Avignon. Besides, in the sixteenth century, Luther's onslaught blasted all hope of unity : and when the Catholic Church wanted to bring about unity by fire and sword, the historians say that eighteen million people, all Christians, perished in consequence. But the idea of unity has lingered on as an illusive and a baffling dream and we are afraid it will ever remain so. These facts reveal to us that in the Church of Rome there never

was anything bearing the semblance of unity ; nor is there any today ; and we are afraid that there can never be any in future. When, therefore, honest and zealous Catholics of the type of Dr. Laha tell us of the unity of the Church as a standing miracle we, who are outside the pale, cannot but regard the idea as a snare and a delusion.

## ADDENDUM

### WHAT JESUS TAUGHT.

The writer's main object has been to examine, as a heathen, the claims of Christianity in general and of Roman Catholicism in particular. He has been obliged to follow a critical and to a great extent destructive method. He now takes the liberty to place before the reader his own ideas as to what Jesus really taught. The exact year in which Jesus was born is uncertain. In reckoning time Christians start with the birth of Christ. This date was fixed by a monk named Dionysius about thirteen hundred years ago. But he was wrong in his figures, because it is certain that Jesus was born before the death of Herod the Great, which took place 750 years after the foundation of Rome (i. e. 750 *ab urbe condita*, "from the founding of the city"), or four years before the Christian era begins. These facts occur in Edward Clodd's "Jesus of Nazareth." It has been stated by the author of "The Great Physician" (London, Watts & Co., 1924) : "The first thirty years of the life of Jesus of Nazareth are shrouded in mystery. 'If of the first twelve years of his human life,' says Dean Farrar, 'we have only a single

incident, of the next eighteen years of his life, we possess no record whatever, save such as is implied in a single word. That word occurs in Mark vi. 3 : 'Is not this the carpenter ?' From this remark which is attributed to the villagers of Nazareth, it may be inferred that his youth and early manhood were devoted to the humble calling of a village carpenter. The parallel passages in the other Synoptics are slightly different. In the first Gospel we have 'Is not this the carpenter's son ?' (xiii. 55), and in the third, 'Is not this Joseph's son ?' (iv. 22)." Writing about Papini's "Story of Christ," Dean Inge has observed that "materials for a biography [of Jesus] are miserably scanty, and some of these are not scientific history as we understand it." This is somewhat remarkable as Christ lived at a time when there was no dearth of historians in the great Roman Empire. We have thus no reliable contemporary record of Christ's actual teachings. As H. G. Wells has observed, the teaching of Jesus had in it something profoundly new and creative : Jesus preached a new Kingdom of Heaven in the hearts and in the world of men. But St. Paul substituted another doctrine for the plain and profoundly revolutionary teachings of Jesus "by expounding a subtle and complex theory of salvation, a salvation which could be attained very largely by belief and formalities without any serious disturbance of the believer's ordinary habits and occupations." Mr. Wells has stated that "official Christianity throughout the world adopted St. Paul's view as plainly expressed in his Epistles--a view which is untraceable in the Gospels. Pauline Christianity means that Jesus was not so much a teacher of new things

as a predestinate divine blood sacrifice made in atonement of a particular historical act of disobedience to the Creator committed by our first parents, Adam and Eve, in response to the temptation of a serpent in the Garden of Eden." Doctrinal Christianity thus built itself upon the theories of Paul, and not upon the injunctions of Jesus. What Jesus preached was a new birth of the human soul; what Paul preached was the ancient religion of priest and altar and propitiatory bloodshed. Dr. Ernst Barthel of Cologne wrote in the *Hibbert Journal* for July, 1928: "The letters from which we learn what his (St. Paul's) teaching was, were written two decades after the death of Jesus, yet he never goes back to the teaching of Jesus himself; not a single saying of his does he quote. If we had to rely for our knowledge of Jesus on St. Paul alone, we should know nothing of either the Sermon on the Mount or the Lord's Prayer, nor should we know anything of the parables. The historical Jesus is for St. Paul entirely hidden behind the Christ idea. But in the historical Jesus is no trace of mysticism, any more than there is any tendency at all to it in the Jewish religion; Jesus is in his teaching always simple and plain."

The *Spectator* of July 17, 1897 published particulars regarding the "Logia" or "Sayings of Jesus," translated from a papyrus discovered by Messrs B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt at Oxyrhynchus, on the borders of the Libyan Desert. The translation was published in London by Henry Frowde. The papyrus is believed to have been written between 150 and 300 after Christ, probably about the year 200 A. C. The *Spectator* wrote: "There are eight Sayings, of which five are unimportant, one

is a curiously poetic variant on the teaching ascribed to our Lord, and two are new, and would, if believed to be the words of Christ, be universally discussed in the Christian world." The *Spectator* condemned the readiness on the part of the Press to accept these "Logia" as genuine utterances of Christ. The fifth Logion of the papyrus runs as follows: "Jesus sayeth, wherever there are.....and there is one.....alone, I am with him. Raise the stone and there thou shalt find me, cleave the wood and there am I." The *Spectator's* comment on this was: "Besides implying in the extreme sense of that theological phrase that Jesus is God, they contain the very essence of pantheism, and would, if fully accepted, completely modify in the Hindoo direction our whole conception of this Universe." The reason given by the *Spectator* was of course sufficient for Christendom to reject the papyrus. Mr. G. C. Ghosh, C. I. E. has in his charming poem entitled "Nirvana: an Exposition of the Old Belief" shown that though scarcely perceived by the Christian yet, his Master taught the state of oneness with God as the ultimate goal of humanity. Mr. Ghosh writes:

If Christ gave God's message true,  
His utterances spoke God's desire  
That man must be God,  
It was the centre of His teaching.

It appears to be probable that Jesus had travelled abroad and assimilated the teaching of the Vedanta from the "wise men of the East." It was revolutionary teaching for the Jews who not only rejected it but reconstructed a religion in Christ's name on the old Hebrew ideas of the fall of man and his redemption by a Messiah.

It may be observed that the dogmas of Pauline Christianity, notwithstanding their long prevalence amongst men of faith, have steadily fallen into disfavour among many people of high culture, with the advance of secular education. In allusion to popular Christianity Tennyson has put the following words into the mouth of one of his characters : "The good Lord Jesus has had his day." Mr. Morton Luce quoted this in *Hibbert Journal* for April 1928 and observed : "Almost every succeeding year has done something to dim the figure of Christ."

The value of the New Testament as an accurate document is greatly discounted by the fact that the idea of preserving details of the life and work of Christ in writing did not occur till the eyewitnesses became rare. As the esteemed Bishop of Calcutta said on July 4, 1924, in an informative address on the Growth of the New Testament, the Jews still looked upon the Old Testament as their Scripture, and it was not till Christianity spread to the Gentiles, who had not the same respect for the Old Testament, that the need for a New Testament was felt. It was not till the year 303 to 397 A.C. that the New Testament record was finally accepted by the Church. Bishop Westcott has observed that "the earliest account of the origins of the Gospel is altogether legendary." The Very Rev. Dean Inge in a contribution to the *Statesman* (March 7, 1937) said : "The records of Christ's teachings were received and sifted in accordance with what the Church thought worthy of the speaker, and of what it thought edifying to the congregation." These facts detract greatly from



the value of Pauline Christianity, the religion that has come to prevail.

There is, as H. W. Dresser reminds us in "The Perfect Whole," need for much earnest effort to sweep away the cold formulas and ceremonies of religion so far as they claim to be what they are not. Intensity of faith, imbibed early in life or contracted by zealous converts, make it impossible for many to discard dogmas however unreliable and unacceptable they may be to rational beings. Thus, in England, we find that orthodox beliefs are maintained in spite of the outstanding fact thus clearly expressed by so good an orthodox Christian as Dr. Edwyn Bevan : "In the case of the earliest Gospel what we have is only what St. Mark recollected, of what Jesus had said some 38 years before St. Peter's death, and that translated from Aramaic into Greek, so that it is absurd, apart from the Church's judgment, to press every clause or every sentence in the words attributed to Jesus as if they had been taken down by phonograph or by shorthand."

Looking round Christendom and towards countries which are dominated by Christian nations the heathen cannot but realize the truth of Pope's noble lines :

In Faith and Hope the world will disagree,  
But all mankind's concern is Charity :  
All must be false that thwart this great end.

## A LAST WORD

Catholic believers regard the Church established by Christ at Rome as a standing miracle. The Trinitarian doctrine is one of the cardinal beliefs of that Church. That doctrine has been referred to in these pages. It may be observed that the doctrine is excluded by the text of Deut. xxxii, 39, Isaiah xliii, 11 ("I, even I, am the Lord ; and beside me there is no saviour"), xliv, 5, 6, Hosea xiii, 4, and Mark xii, 29. Only traces of the doctrine may be found in the New Testament which was compiled some time after Christ's death. Christ himself never talked about it. The doctrine originated in the early centuries of Christianity and was elaborated fully in the Athanasian creed (4th century A. C.). It was fought out during centuries after Christ's death and was established by a vote which settled the creed for Christians. The Council of Nicaea met in 325 A. C. to decide what Christians should believe. The faith of Christianity depended upon whether the majority at Nicaea voted for *homoousion* or *homoiousion*. The Athanasians outvoted the Arians. Ante-Nicene literature makes it clear that Justin Martyr, Irenaeus and Tertullian distinctly subordinated Christ to God. The Trinitarian doctrine is thus founded not on Divine authority but on the finding of a council of theologians. The element of miracle in connection with it is thus non-existent.

We have referred to the character of the New Testament as an authentic record of Christ's utterances and we have quoted the view of Dr. Edwyn Bevan on page

96. On critical grounds doubt must be expressed whether the Gospels always reproduce the *ipsissimæ verba* of Jesus. It is fairly certain that Jesus taught in Aramaic, a language very different from Greek and more defective in syntax and vocabulary. A translation is liable to distort the meaning of the original. The report of the Commission on Christian Doctrine (published in January, 1938) claims that the substance of the teaching of the Master has been preserved; but it states that "there is some reason to think that in some cases the words attributed to our Lord reflect rather the experience of the primitive Church, or the utterances of Christian prophets, than the actual words of Jesus." Commenting on this, Mr. A. D. Howell Smith has observed: "Are we as critics justified in limiting this category of alleged Jesuine *logia* to 'some cases'? Is it not probable that the long discourses of the Johannine Jesus are the 'utterances' (or literary compositions) of a Christian mystic? More than one Christian scholar has admitted this. And do not several of the Synoptic *logia*, including the command to baptize in the name of the Trinity, 'reflect.....the experience of the primitive church?'"

We have in Chapter II noticed briefly the representation of the God in the Bible. We find in Ex. xxxii, 27: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbour." We find in Jer. xix, 8, 9: "And I will make this city desolate and an hissing; everyone that passeth thereby shall be astonished and hiss because of all the plagues thereof.

And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat everyone the flesh of his friend in the siege and straitness, wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall straiten them." We find God telling his chosen people in Lev. xxv, 44: "Both thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids which thou shalt have, shall be, of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids." Such gems abound in the Old Testament, which is regarded by millions of believers to be the Word of God. Those who are willing to think and to exercise their independent judgment will have no doubt that the Bible is the product not of Divine inspiration but of the primitive Hebrew scribes. That special expurgated editions of the Bible for the use of the young have been issued in the West furnishes evidence of the growing intelligence in religious matters of a small section of the Western intelligentsia although the majority are still with the Rev. H. P. Denison, Prebendary of Wells who has thus given expression to his own view of the "bowdlerising" of the Bible: "We must have made ourselves the laughing-stock of Christendom by our idea of drawing a pen through everything in the Psalms that official Church of Englandism thinks is not quite nice."

## **AN APOLOGY.**

Several typographical errors and omissions, more or less serious, for which the writer must humbly apologise to the reader, have crept in. Thus, the first part of the statement of Mr. Winston Churchill quoted on p. 33 should read as follows :

“Gandhism and all it stood for would, sooner or later, have to be grappled with and finally crushed.”

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